Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement

Nov/Dec 2010 • $4.50

Seeking Treasure on Sydney Harbour

A happy group discovers lasting wealth on a four-hour cruise

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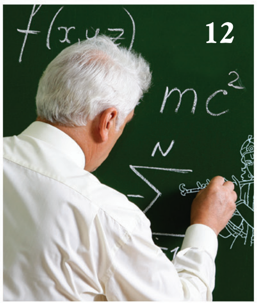
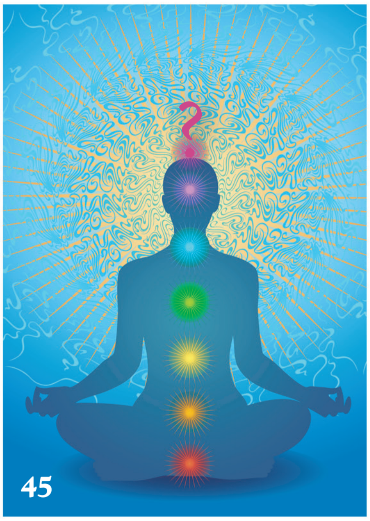
BACK to GODH

Founded 1944 • Vol. 44, No. 6 • November / December 2010





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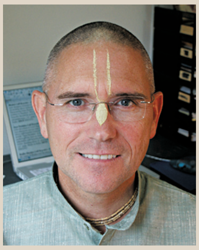
COVER The Sydney Opera House provides the backdrop for a *kīrtana* cruise on Sydney Harbour that drew more than two hundred participants. Please see the article beginning on page 50. (Photo by Vara-nayaka Dāsa.)

"Seeing something to be disconnected from Kṛṣṇa is māyā, *or illusion, because we are forgetting the original reality while taking the reflection to be very important. For example, suppose the sun is reflected in the water and then shines on the wall. If we take the light on the wall to be very important and forget the sun, the original reality, that is* māyā.*"—p. 43*

WELCOME

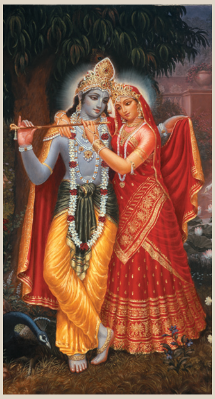


KĪRTANA, chanting the names of God, is the central practice of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Kṛṣṇa devotees chant quietly on beads and sing loudly in temples and in public. Earlier this year, two hundred devotees boarded the Vagabond Spirit for a four-hour *kīrtana* cruise in Sydney Harbour, the subject of this issue's cover story.

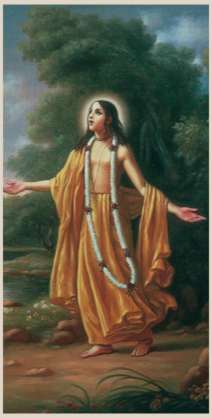
The word *kīrtana* is related to the word *kīrti,* which means "fame." Broadly speaking, *kīrtana* means to make famous by any means possible. Because devotees want to introduce Kṛṣṇa and His teachings to everyone, they focus much energy on distributing Kṛṣṇa-related books. In "The Mission of Book Distribution," Karuṇā Dhārinī Devī Dāsī discusses some of the history and philosophy of book distribution by Śrīla Prabhupāda's followers over the past forty-plus years. In "Back on the Path Back Home," Sai Bhupalam, a grateful recipient of one of Prabhupāda's books, tells his story of coming to Kṛṣṇa.

People sometimes ridicule Kṛṣṇa devotees for singing Hare Kṛṣṇa in public, unaware of the deep philosophy behind the singing. In "The God Logic," Abhij Toley explains why a genuine spiritual path like Kṛṣṇa consciousness is just as logical and scientific as the modern scientific method.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor*



Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are together the one Supreme Absolute Truth.



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined incarnation of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, inaugurated the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa five hundred years ago.

OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

BACK TO
GODHEAD
*The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement*

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Letters

Impressing a Nine-Year-Old

I love BTG! Whenever an issue comes in my mailbox I feel like Kṛṣṇa was thinking of me.

I have a five-year-old daughter and a nine-year-old son. My daughter is very "into" Kṛṣṇa, my son—not so much. But in the July/August issue there was a piece on the movie *Avatar.* My son had seen the movie and thought it was fantastic. So I said, "Hey, Cam, there's an article about *Avatar* in here," and showed him the picture. Unfortunately, he could hardly take his eyes off the video game he was playing. But later on, he picked up BTG. He asked me where the article was. (Sad to say, it was the first time he'd ever showed an interest in BTG.) Anyway, he read the article and was impressed. I'm grateful to get a little Kṛṣṇa into him any way I can!

I'll look forward to more "love letters from Kṛṣṇa" as I enjoy the next three years of my subscription.

Avril Heffernan
Middleboro, Massachusetts

Qualifications of a Disciple

Could you kindly help me to know the minimum qualification for a disciple?

R. Radhakrishna
Via the Internet

Our reply: "Disciple" means one who has an attitude of surrender and submission toward the guru and is willing to follow instructions with discipline. That attitude is essential. Any guru in ISKCON will ask you to follow basic rules, the four regulative principles: no eating of meat, fish or eggs; no illicit sex (sex only in marriage, and only to have children); no gambling; and no intoxication (including caffeinated beverages). Also, you will be asked to chant a minimum of sixteen good rounds of *japa* on beads every day.

Many ISKCON gurus require at least one year of "testing" each other, so that both can learn more about each other and become fixed in the confidence that each will do his or her part to assist in the growth of the disciple's Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states that for learning to take place, both the hearer and the speaker must be qualified.

Some gurus also require systematic study of Prabhupāda's books, sometimes followed by an exam, to see that the potential disciple is fully aware of the basic philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

But the "minimum" is to have a servant's mentality, a desire to please guru and Kṛṣṇa, and the determination to follow the vows required at initiation: the four regulative principles and sixteen rounds daily.

Stories from Other Planets

It is mentioned in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that it contains stories about devotees from other planets, not just this planet. How does the story come to be known here and then be written in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*?

Pooja Jayaswal
Via the Internet

Our reply: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam was compiled by Śrīla Vyāsadeva, a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra* of Lord Viṣṇu. Vyāsadeva is a *jīva* soul like us, but he has been directly empowered by the Supreme Lord to compile the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* The stories in the *Bhāgavatam* are historical, and the Lord and many of His empowered devotees are *tri-kāla-jñā:* they can know the past, the present, and the future.

Śrīla Prabhupāda mentions in his purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.5.13: "Such liberated persons as Vyāsadeva are perfect not only by the power of vision and wisdom, but also in aural reception, in thinking, feeling, and all other sense activities. A liberated person possesses perfect senses, and with perfect senses only can one serve the sense proprietor, Hṛṣīkeśa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa the Personality of Godhead. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* therefore, is the perfect description of the all-perfect Personality of Godhead by the all-perfect personality Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the compiler of the *Vedas.*"

Concept of "Śiva"

After a long time, I have come across a brilliant article titled "Time & Again," by Mathureśa Dāsa, in the July/August issue. Not only has it clarified many unresolved questions revolving in my mind about time, creation, material nature, etc., but it has vastly removed the conundrum I had about the concept of Śiva. I now better understand the entity, the institution, and the role of Lord Śiva. The confusion generated in me by studying *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (especially Canto 4) and *Brahma-saṁhitā* has finally been subdued by this article. I thank the author for this contribution.

Rathin Chowdhury
Long Island, New York

Quality, Relevance, And Devotion

We just today received our latest issue of BTG magazine [September/October] and had to write to express our appreciation for the overall excellence of the magazine. Śrīla Prabhupāda would be extremely pleased by its content—the quality, relevance, and devotional nature of every article. The colorful illustrations are like icing on a cake. Already I have read five articles, and this in the midst of a very busy day. Such a balance of insight, practicality, and scriptural reference came through in each of these interesting and heartfelt articles. Along with eternal gratitude to Śrīla Prabhupāda, I want to say thanks to all the contributors. You made my day!

I wish the whole world could read *Back to Godhead,* for this would surely facilitate each soul's quick progress on the spiritual path.

Kṛṣṇanandinī Devī Dāsī
Cleveland, Ohio

Replies beginning "Our reply" were written by Krishna.com Live Help volunteers. Please write to us at: BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, Florida 32616, USA. Email: editors@krishna.com.

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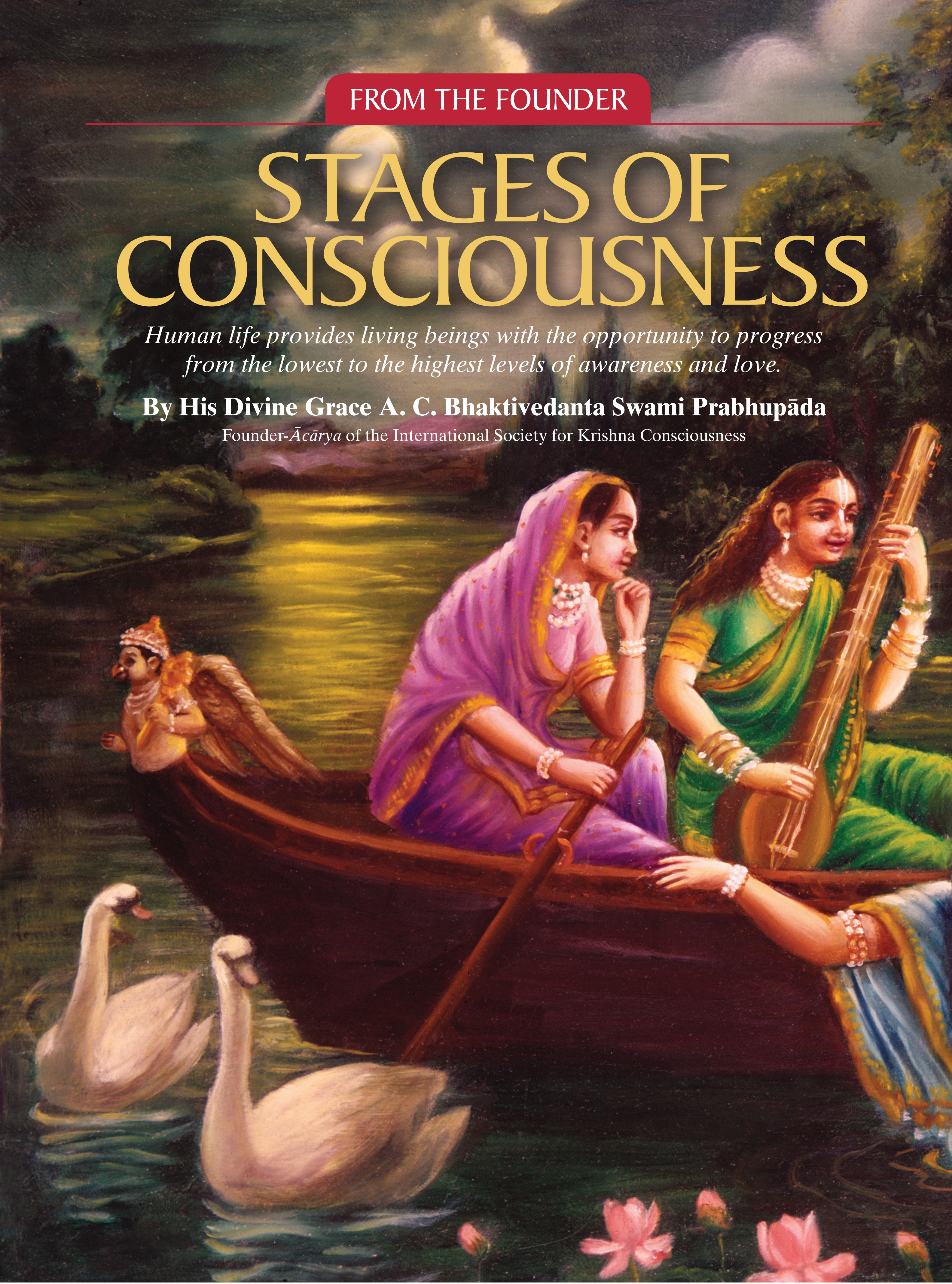
FROM THE FOUNDER

STAGES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

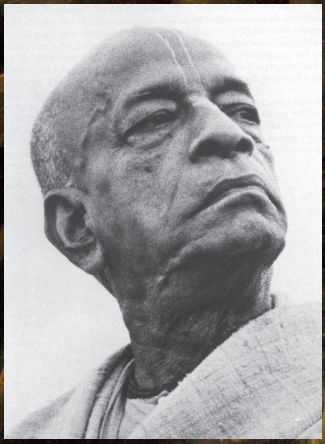
Human life provides living beings with the opportunity to progress from the lowest to the highest levels of awareness and love.

By His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

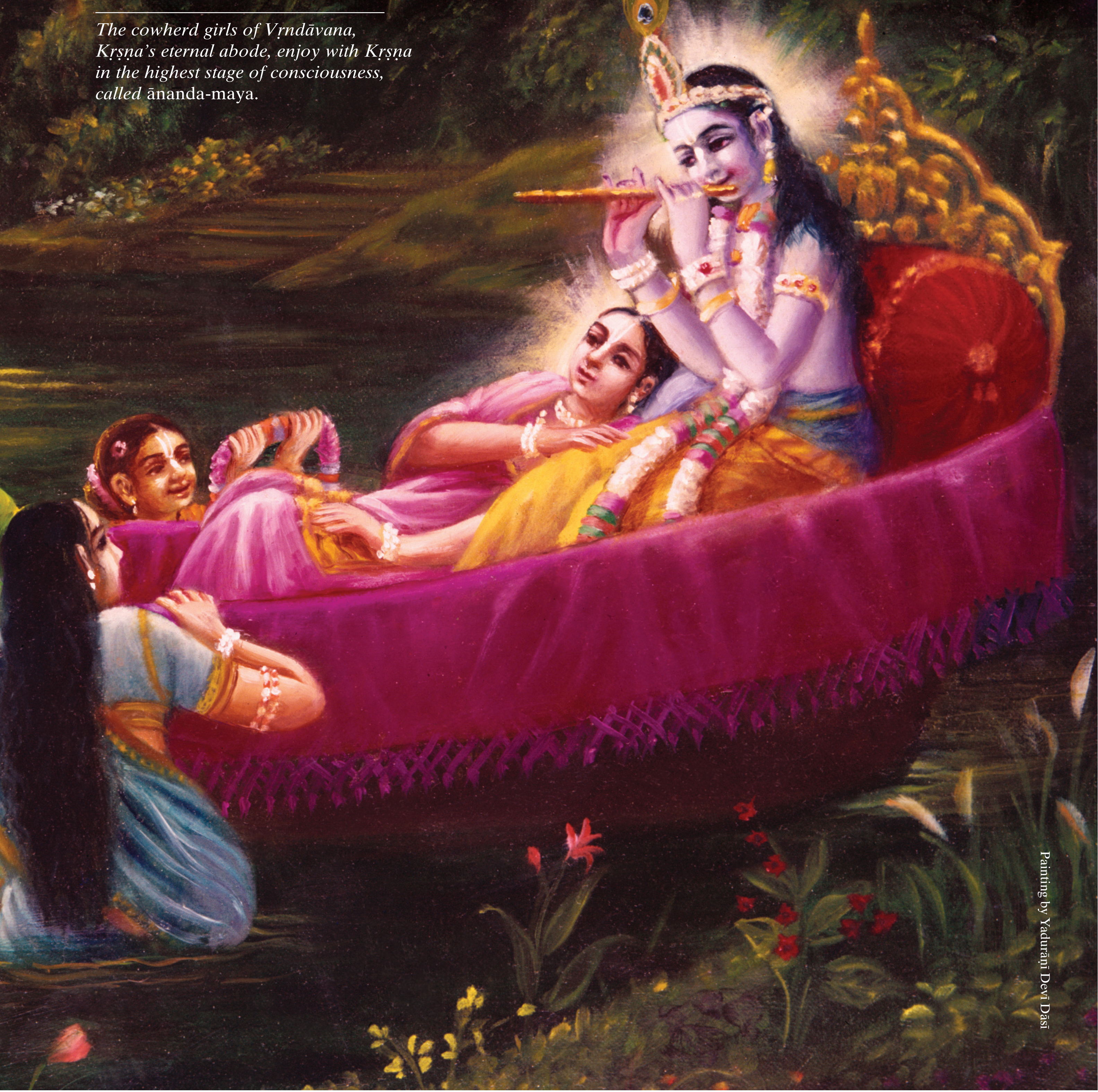
Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness



In place of our usual “Founder’s Lecture,” in this issue we present an excerpt from the book Kṛṣṇa: The Supreme Personality of Godhead, *Śrīla Prabhupāda’s summary study of the Tenth Canto of the* Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. *This excerpt comes from Chapter Eighty-seven, entitled “The Prayers of the Personified Vedas.” Just before the creation, the personified* Vedas *appeared as the first emanations from the breathing of Lord Viṣṇu and recited prayers for His glorification.*



THE PERSONIFIED *Vedas* continued: “Dear Lord, it is imperative that the living entities be engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, always rendering devotional service by such prescribed methods as hearing and chanting and executing Your orders. If a person is not engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and devotional service, it is useless for him to exhibit the symptoms of life. Generally if a person is breathing he is accepted to be alive. But a person without Kṛṣṇa consciousness may be compared to a bellows in a blacksmith’s shop. The big bellows is a bag of skin which exhales and



The cowherd girls of Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa’s eternal abode, enjoy with Kṛṣṇa in the highest stage of consciousness, called ānanda-maya.

Painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī

inhales air, and a human being who simply lives within the bag of skin and bones without taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and loving devotional service is no better than the bellows. Similarly, a nondevotee's long duration of life is compared to the long existence of a tree, his voracious eating capacity is compared to the eating of dogs and hogs, and his enjoyment in sex life is compared to that of hogs and goats."

The cosmic manifestation has been made possible because of the entrance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as Mahā-Viṣṇu within this material world. The total material energy is agitated by the glance of Mahā-Viṣṇu, and only then does the interaction of the three material qualities begin. Therefore it should be concluded that whatever material facilities we are trying to enjoy are available only due to the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The Supreme Brahman and the subordinate Brahman, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the living entities, are both joyful by nature.

Within the body there are five different departments of existence, known as *anna-maya, prāṇa-maya, mano-maya, vijñāna-maya,* and at last, *ānanda-maya.* In the beginning of life, every living entity is food conscious. A child or an animal is satisfied only by getting nice food. This stage of consciousness, in which the goal is to eat sumptuously, is called *anna-maya. Anna* means "food." After this one lives in the consciousness of being alive. If one can continue his life without being attacked or destroyed, one thinks himself happy. This stage is called *prāṇa-maya,* or consciousness of one's existence. After this stage, when one is situated on the mental platform, his consciousness is called *mano-maya.* The materialistic civilization is primarily situated in these three stages, *anna-maya, prāṇa-maya,* and *mano-maya.* The first concern of civilized persons is economic development, the next concern is defense against being annihilated, and the next consciousness is mental speculation, the philosophical approach to the values of life.

If by the evolutionary process of philosophical life one happens to reach the platform of intellectual life and understands that he is not this material body but a spiritual soul, he is situated in the *vijñāna-maya* stage. Then, by evolution in spiritual life, he comes to the understanding of the Supreme Lord, or the Supreme Soul. When one develops his relationship with Him and executes devotional service, that stage of life is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the *ānanda-maya* stage.

Ānanda-maya is the blissful life of knowledge and eternity. As it is said in the *Vedānta-sūtra, ānanda-mayo 'bhyāsāt.* The Supreme Brahman and the subordinate Brahman, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the living entities, are both joyful by nature. As long as the living entities are situated in the lower four stages of life—*anna-maya, prāṇa-maya, mano-maya,* and *vijñāna-maya*—they are considered to be in the material condition of life, but as soon as one reaches the stage of *ānanda-maya,* he is a liberated soul.

This *ānanda-maya* stage is explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā* as the *brahma-bhūta* stage. There it is said that in the *brahma-bhūta* stage of life there is no anxiety and no hankering. This stage begins when one is equally disposed toward all living entities, and it then expands to the stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in which one always hankers to render service unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This hankering for advancement in devotional service is not the same as hankering for sense gratification in material existence. In other words, hankering remains in spiritual life, but it becomes purified. Similarly, when our senses are purified, they are freed from all material stages, namely *anna-maya, prāṇa-maya, mano-maya,* and *vijñāna-maya,* and they become situated in the highest stage—*ānanda-maya,* or blissful life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Oneness Does Not Mean Merging

The Māyāvādī [impersonalist] philosophers consider *ānanda-maya* to be the state of being merged in the Supreme. To them, *ānanda-maya* means that the Supersoul and the individual soul become one. But the real fact is that oneness does not mean merging into the Supreme and losing one's own individual existence. Merging into the spiritual existence is the living entity's realization of qualitative oneness with the Supreme Lord in His aspects of eternity and knowledge. But the actual *ānanda-maya* (blissful) stage is attained when one is engaged in devotional service. That is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā: mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām.* Here Lord Kṛṣṇa states that the *brahma-bhūta ānanda-maya* stage is complete only when there is an exchange of love between the Supreme and the subordinate living entities.

Unless one comes to this *ānanda-maya* stage, his breathing is like the breathing of a bellows in a blacksmith's shop, his duration of life is like that of a tree, and he is no better than the lower animals like the camels, hogs, and dogs.

Undoubtedly the eternal living entity cannot be annihilated at any point. But the lower species of life exist in a miserable condition, whereas one who is engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord is situated in the pleasurable, or *ānanda-maya,* status of life. The different stages described above are all in relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although in all circumstances there exist both the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the living entities, the difference is that the Supreme Personality of Godhead always exists in the *ānanda-maya* stage, whereas the subordinate living entities, because of their minute position as fragmental portions of the Supreme Lord, are prone to fall to the other stages of life. Although in all the stages both the Supreme Lord and the living entities exist, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is always transcendental to our concept of life, whether we are in bondage or in liberation. The whole cosmic manifestation becomes possible by the grace of the Supreme Lord, it exists by the grace of the Supreme Lord, and when annihilated it merges into the existence of the Supreme Lord. As such, the Supreme Lord is the supreme existence, the cause of all causes. Therefore the conclusion is that without development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness one's life is simply a waste of time.

Meditation for The Materialistic

For those who are very materialistic and cannot understand the situation of the spiritual world, the abode of Kṛṣṇa, great sages have recommended the yogic process whereby one gradually rises from meditation on the abdomen, which is called *mūlādhāra* or *maṇipūraka* meditation. *Mūlādhāra* and *maṇipūraka* are technical terms which refer to the intestines within the abdomen. Grossly materialistic persons think that economic development is of foremost importance because they are under the impression that a living entity exists only by eating. Such grossly materialistic persons forget that although we may eat as much as we like, if the food is not digested it produces the troubles of indigestion and acidity. Therefore, eating is not in itself the cause of the vital energy of life. For digestion of eatables we have to take shelter of another, superior energy, which is mentioned in the *Bhagavad-gītā* as *vaiśvānara.* Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that He helps the digestion in the form of *vaiśvānara.* The Supreme Personality of Godhead is all-pervasive; therefore, His presence in the stomach as *vaiśvānara* is not extraordinary.

Kṛṣṇa is actually present everywhere. The Vaiṣṇava, therefore, marks his body with temples of Viṣṇu: he first marks a *tilaka* temple on the abdomen, then on the chest, then between the collarbones, then on the forehead, and gradually he marks the top of the head, the *brahma-randhra.*

The thirteen temples of *tilaka* marked on the body of a Vaiṣṇava are known as follows: On the forehead is the temple of Lord Keśava, on the belly is the temple of Lord Nārāyaṇa, on the chest is the temple of Lord Mādhava, and on the throat, between the two collarbones, is the temple of Lord Govinda. On the right side of the waist is the temple of Lord Viṣṇu, on the right arm the temple of Lord Madhusūdana, and on the right side of the collarbone the temple of Lord Trivikrama. Similarly, on the left side of the waist is the temple of Lord Vāmanadeva, on the left arm the temple of Śrīdhara, on the left side of the collarbone the temple of Hṛṣīkeśa, on the upper back the temple called Padmanābha, and on the lower back the temple called Dāmodara. On the top of the head is the temple called Vāsudeva.

This is the process of meditation on the Lord's situation in the different parts of the body, but for those who are not Vaiṣṇavas, great sages recommend meditation on the bodily concept of life—meditation on the intestines, on the heart, on the throat, on the eyebrows, on the forehead, and then on the top

What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millennia ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in b**u**t, long **ā** like the **a** in f**a**r (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in ev**a**de, long **ī** like the **i** in p**i**que. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **ri**m, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in staun**ch-h**eart, hed**ge-h**og, and re**d-h**ot. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or his great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

of the head. Some of the sages in the disciplic succession from the great saint Aruṇa meditate on the heart, because the Supersoul stays within the heart along with the living entity. This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* fifteenth chapter, wherein the Lord states, "I am situated in everyone's heart."

As part of devotional service, Vaiṣṇavas protect the body for the service of the Lord, but those who are gross materialists accept the body as the self. They worship the body by the yogic process of meditation on the different bodily parts, such as *maṇipūraka, dahara,* and *hṛdaya,* gradually rising to the *brahma-randhra,* on the top of the head. The first-class yogi who has attained perfection in the practice of the yoga system ultimately passes through the *brahma-randhra* to any one of the planets in either the material or spiritual worlds. How a yogi can transfer himself to another planet is vividly described in the Second Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*

Meditation on The Universal Form

In this regard, Śukadeva Gosvāmī has recommended that the beginners worship the *virāṭ-puruṣa,* the gigantic universal form of the Lord. One who cannot believe that the Lord can be worshiped with equal success in the deity, or *arcā* form, or who cannot concentrate on this form is advised to worship the universal form of the Lord. The lower part of the universe is considered the feet and legs of the Lord's universal form, the middle part of the universe is considered the navel or abdomen of the Lord, the upper planetary systems such as Janaloka and Maharloka are the heart of the Lord, and the topmost planetary system, Brahmaloka, is considered the top of the Lord's head.

There are different processes recommended by great sages according to the position of the worshiper, but the ultimate aim of all meditational yogic processes is to go back home, back to Godhead. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* anyone who reaches the highest planet, the abode of Kṛṣṇa, or even the Vaikuṇṭha planets, never has to come down again to this miserable material condition of life.

The Vedic recommendation, therefore, is that one make the lotus feet of Viṣṇu the target of all one's efforts. *Tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam:* the Viṣṇu planets, or Viṣṇuloka, are situated above all the material planets. These Vaikuṇṭha planets are known as *sanātana-dhāma,* and they are eternal. They are never annihilated, not even by the annihilation of this material world. The conclusion is that if a human being does not fulfill the mission of his life by worshiping the Supreme Lord and does not go back home, back to Godhead, it is to be understood that he is breathing just like a blacksmith's bellows, living just like a tree, eating just like a camel, and having sex just like the dogs and hogs. Thus he has been frustrated in fulfilling the specific purpose of human life. ✽

LOOKING FOR NEWS OF THE HARE KṚṢṆA MOVEMENT?

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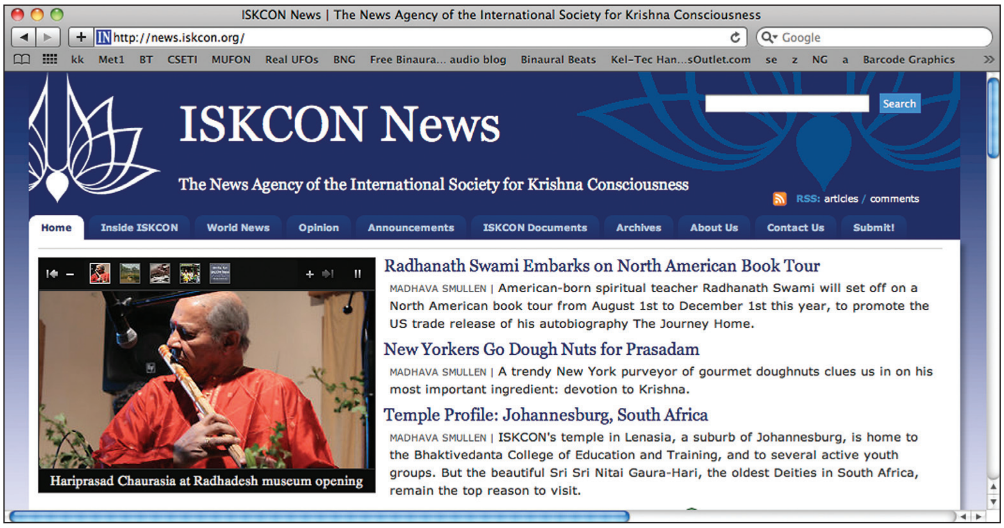

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ISKCON News

The News Agency of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Radhanath Swami Embarks on North American Book Tour

MADHAVA SMULLEN | American-born spiritual teacher Radhanath Swami will set off on a North American book tour from August 1st to December 1st this year, to promote the US trade release of his autobiography The Journey Home.

New Yorkers Go Dough Nuts for Prasadam

MADHAVA SMULLEN | A trendy New York purveyor of gourmet doughnuts clues us in on his most important ingredient: devotion to Krishna.

Temple Profile: Johannesburg, South Africa

MADHAVA SMULLEN | ISKCON's temple in Lenasia, a suburb of Johannesburg, is home to the Bhaktivedanta College of Education and Training, and to several active youth groups. But the beautiful Sri Sri Nitai Gaura-Hari, the oldest Deities in South Africa, remain the top reason to visit.

Hariprasad Chaurasia at Radhadesh museum opening

Glossary

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Ācārya—a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Balarāma—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.

Battle of Kurukshetra—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.

Bhagavad-gītā**—**the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna. (Cited as Bg.)

Bhakti—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.

Darśana—"viewing," audience with a deity or saintly person.

Dharma—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).

Godhead—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.

Gurukula—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").

Hare Kṛṣṇa—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Japa—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.

Kali-yuga—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.

Karma—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.

Kīrtana—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).

Kṛṣṇa—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").

Mahābhārata**—**the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.

Māyā—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.

Māyāvādī—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal.

Modes of nature—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.

Nityānanda—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prasādam—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion.

Purāṇas**—**Vedic histories.

Rādhārāṇī—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.

Rathayātrā—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").

Sannyāsa—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.

Śrī—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).

Śrīla Prabhupāda—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam**—**the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas,* which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.

Supersoul—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.

Upaniṣads**—**the 108 essential philosophical treatises that appear within the *Vedas.*

Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).

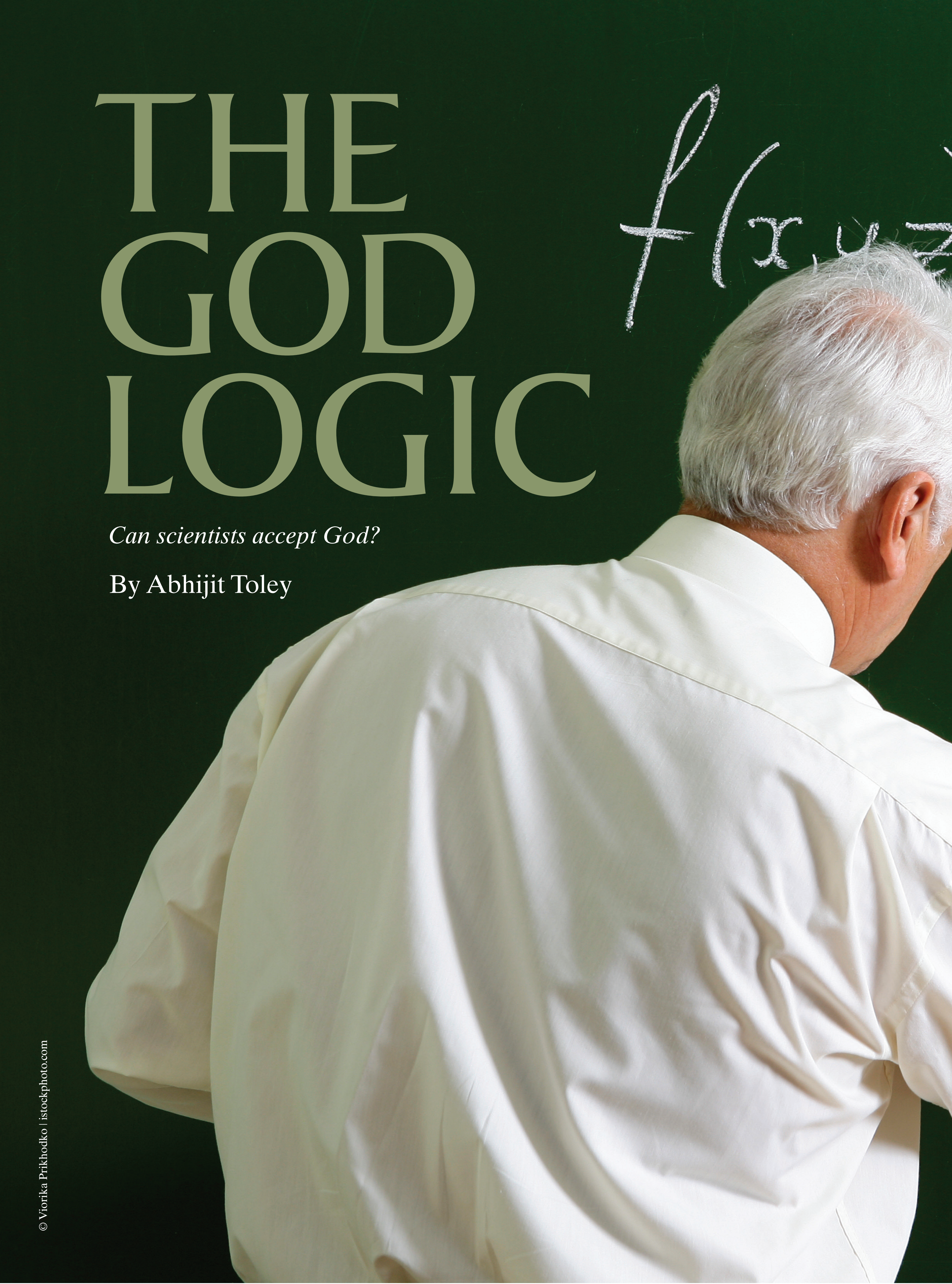
Varṇāśrama—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).

Vedas**—**the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.

Vedic—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.

Viṣṇu—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.



THE GOD LOGIC

Can scientists accept God?

By Abhijit Toley

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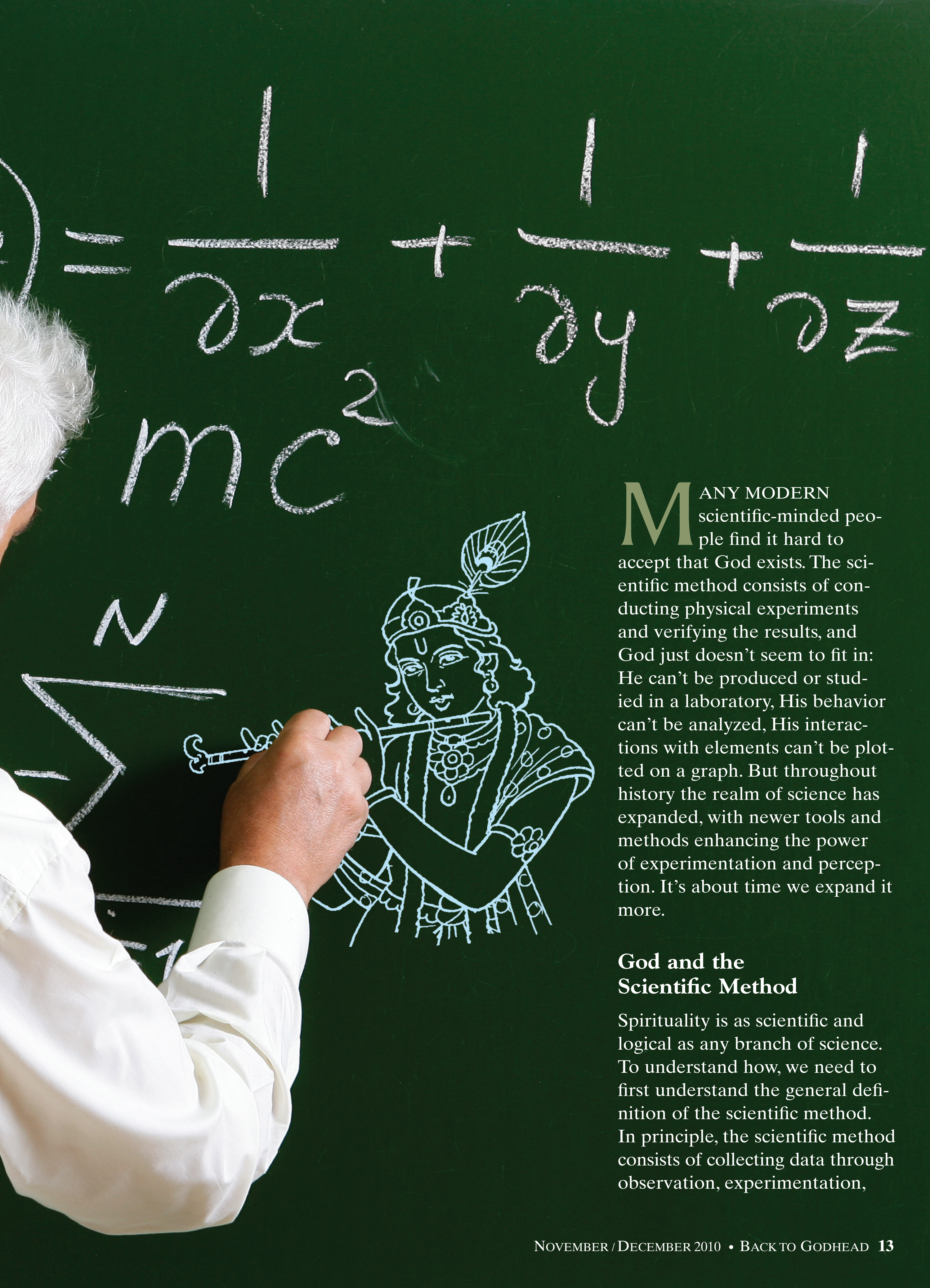


MANY MODERN scientific-minded people find it hard to accept that God exists. The scientific method consists of conducting physical experiments and verifying the results, and God just doesn't seem to fit in: He can't be produced or studied in a laboratory, His behavior can't be analyzed, His interactions with elements can't be plotted on a graph. But throughout history the realm of science has expanded, with newer tools and methods enhancing the power of experimentation and perception. It's about time we expand it more.

God and the Scientific Method

Spirituality is as scientific and logical as any branch of science. To understand how, we need to first understand the general definition of the scientific method. In principle, the scientific method consists of collecting data through observation, experimentation, and then formulating and testing a hypothesis. Subsequent experiments then try to prove or disprove the hypothesis. If the results of the experiments match the predictions of the hypothesis, the hypothesis gains credence. Otherwise, ideally at least, the hypothesis is discarded. (Unfortunately, hypotheses are often prematurely accepted as truth. The Big Bang theory and black holes are examples of this.)

We can quite easily apply the scientific method in our quest for spiritual truths. Around us in nature we see laws, design, beauty, majesty, symmetry, intricacy, and so on. We can surely hypothesize the existence of a supremely intelligent being who is the source of all that exists. Many of the most celebrated scientists and thinkers have expressed such views. For example, Isaac Newton said, "The wonderful arrangement and harmony of the cosmos would only originate in the plan of an almighty omniscient being. This is, and remains, my greatest comprehension."

The scriptures of most major religions have always asserted the existence of God. Along with assertions, they detail processes by which one can perceive God in lesser or greater degrees. For example, in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.9.31) Lord Viṣṇu says, "Knowledge about Me as described in the scriptures is very confidential, and it has to be realized in conjunction with devotional service. The necessary paraphernalia for that process is being explained by Me. You may take it up carefully."

Following scriptures and sincere devotees of God is not blind faith. It is accepting the existence of God as a sound hypothesis, and then experimenting, by following the prescribed process, to establish or disprove the hypothesis. By sincere effort on a well-documented path revealed in the scriptures, one can perceive God.

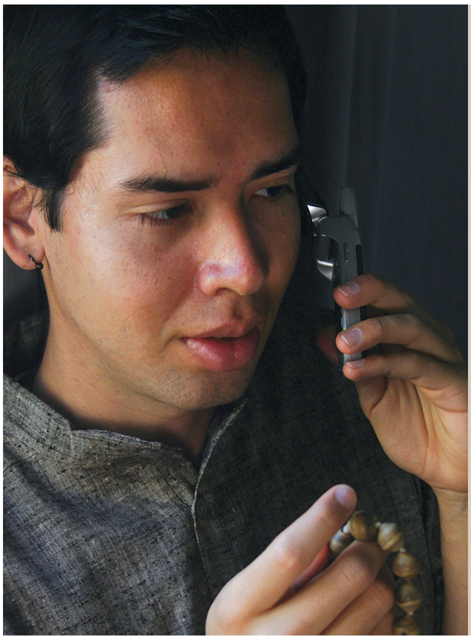
Initially, a little bit of reasonable faith (hypothesis) is required to start off (experiment) on a path suggested by the scriptures and the devotees of God. A systematic understanding of the science of God fortifies one's faith, which strengthens even more when one sees that the results of following the process match the theory. And the fortified faith, in turn, inspires one to follow the process even more sincerely, leading to even deeper experiences of God.

As with any other form of learning, the student requires a teacher advanced in the practice of the science. The student can take practical instructions from the teacher, ask him deep questions, and study the scriptures under his guidance. Of course, the teacher must be a devotee of God; otherwise how can he guide his students toward direct perception of God? As Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.34), "Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth."

Direct Experience

Even though God is beyond the perception of the common man, He appreciates the sincerity of the seeker's efforts and responds accordingly. To the degree that God reciprocates, the internal world (essentially the desires) of the seeker transforms. Although direct audience with God is difficult to achieve quickly, one can reap many other tangible results in a short time, and thereby gain confidence in the scriptural instructions.

A sincere seeker's realizations are in line with the principles of the scriptures, and therefore are not hallucinations. Powerful transcendentalists in all spiritual traditions have spoken or written about their experiences with God. To



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IN MEMORIAM

Aindra Dāsa

AINDRA DĀSA (Edward Franklin Striker) was born in Arlington, Virginia, in 1953. He was a disciple of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and became known not only in India but throughout the world for his dedication to *kīrtana*. He passed away at ISKCON's Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir in Vrindavan, India, on July 17, 2010.

He met devotees of Kṛṣṇa in 1973, and was initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda a few months later in the Washington, D.C., ISKCON temple. He lived as a *brahmacārī,* mainly in India, until his sudden departure.

Although he was known for his expertise in deity worship and his enthusiasm for his spiritual practices, his renown came from establishing and carrying out the now famous 24-Hour-Kirtan Mandali at the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir, a program conceived by Śrīla Prabhupāda himself. Along the way, Aindra's name became synonymous with deep, soulful chanting, as he released numerous CDs that were distributed around the world. Gradually, he became something of an icon because of his melodious singing. Connoisseurs, especially, marveled at his unique and captivating style. Aspiring *kīrtanīyas* and admirers traveled to India from every continent to chant with him and experience *kīrtana* in his presence. He will be greatly missed. —*Satyarāja Dāsa*

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discard all their experiences as irrelevant is presumptuous. Furthermore, realization of spiritual truths helps the practitioner lead a better, more meaningful life, and to have better control of his life than others.

While results of material processes can be verified in a laboratory, the results of spiritual ones can be verified in the laboratory of one's own heart. Lust, greed, anger, and other dirty things in the heart reduce drastically and quickly when one practices spiritual processes. The practitioner can easily verify these internal transformations, which manifest externally in the form of positive changes in one's life. A person progressing spiritually will give up bad habits like intoxication, increase spiritual activities like prayer and meditation, and improve in qualities like patience, mercy, cleanliness, and tolerance.

Along with these changes comes the lasting joy of spiritual happiness. The practitioner discovers a positive energy driven by the lofty goal of spiritual progress and enjoys the process itself. Spiritual activities are natural to the soul, and consequently the most joyful.

These tangible results inspire the practitioner to continue following the process, leading to more results, all of which are tangible. In fact, what was abstract and theoretical yesterday becomes practical and tangible today. What was once just the word of scripture becomes the reality of one's own life. What more proof could one ask for?

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.2) Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa summarizes this point succinctly: "This knowledge [spiritual knowledge] is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets. It is the purest knowledge, and because it gives direct perception of the self by realization, it is the perfection of religion. It is everlasting, and it is joyfully performed."

It's a Science

Following a spiritual process as described above is as scientific as the modern scientific method. Spirituality is a verifiable science, and moreover, it is genuinely helpful to everyone who practices it. The tools and methods for practicing this science might not be prevalent in the scientific world today, but surely the ancient wisdom traditions suffered from no such handicap. Their system of logic and reasoning did not exclude God from its domain; on the contrary, all their logic was used to eventually establish the existence of God as an undeniable fact. Indeed, theirs was the God logic.

Abhijit Toley is a member of the congregation of ISKCON's Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kuñjabihārī Temple in Pune, India. He works as a principal software engineer with Symantec Corporation in Pune.

The Mission of B

Śrīla Prabhupāda inherited the mission to distribute books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness from his spiritual master, and passed it on to his disciples.

By Karuṇā Dhārinī Devī Dāsī

I FELT DISILLUSIONED with performing the Catholic rituals I grew up with," explains Christina Camacho. "I abandoned them and went looking at various Eastern doctrines. I finished my master's degree in counseling and took a trip to Japan to study Buddhism, but it didn't touch my heart."

In 1976, Christina, now known as Pāvakā Dāsī, bought a copy of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* from a devotee at the Los Angeles airport. She read it and was inspired to order the rest of Prabhupāda's books, one after another, through the mail.

"Only through Śrīla Prabhupāda's books," Pāvakā says, "was I able to become centered on myself as the soul and take up the process of devotional service. For ten years I didn't spend much time at a temple, but Prabhupāda became my guru through the purports in his books."

Now Pāvakā acts as coordinator for the life membership program at the ISKCON temple in Los Angeles. She got that first book because a devotee of Kṛṣṇa went to a public place and sifted through hundreds of passersby to find a person who showed interest. Those who embrace the uplifting concepts found in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books often like to share his books with others.

Karuṇa Dhārinī Devī Dāsī (2)

Formerly the Sanskrit literature was not easily available, even in India. Some well-to-do people had copies in their homes, but the books were more or less the treasure of the *brāhmaṇas,* the priestly class, and often kept within the temple. Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, had a more liberal attitude and encouraged his disciples to print and distribute the Vaiṣṇava scriptures generously. Śrīla Prabhupāda carefully translated and wrote commentary on these transcendental

Govinda Datta Dāsa shows art from the Bhagavad-gītā As It Is *to visitors at Ocean Front Park in Venice, California, near Los Angeles (above and right).*

ook Distribution

Advaita Ācārya Dāsa

A flooded parking lot at a Warped Tour concert doesn't deter Ānanda Vidyā Dāsa.

scriptures and took up the task of distributing them on a grand scale.

Śrīla Prabhupāda gave his full blessings to disciples who accepted the mission to distribute the books he translated.

Bhṛgupati Dāsa, a full-time distributor of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books for thirty-five years, explains, "On more than one occasion, Śrīla Prabhupāda told us that preachers are very quickly recognized by Kṛṣṇa. That's our objective, so why not take shelter of a particularly effective way to achieve it? I very much like the experience of Kṛṣṇa's using me as His instrument to engage the people I meet in devotional service."

Śrīla Prabhupāda Initiates Book Distribution

With powerful determination, Śrīla Prabhupāda acted on his guru's ideas for printing and distributing books. Before departing for America in 1965, with little financial support he began translating and publishing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* a monumental work about God and His devotees. He carried a trunkload of the first three volumes with him as he crossed the Atlantic on an ocean freighter to America. Alone in his early days in the West, he was not shy about selling the three-volume set to anyone who showed genuine interest.

In 1972, the Macmillan Company published Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is.* It received acclaim from scholars at many leading universities and quickly gained popularity. It can now be read in over one hundred languages.

Soon after, *Kṛṣṇa: The Supreme Personality of Godhead* was printed in Tokyo. Known in ISKCON as "the Kṛṣṇa book," it is Prabhupāda's summary study of the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* which describes Kṛṣṇa's activities on this planet fifty centuries ago. When Prabhupāda was presented the first carton of the Kṛṣṇa book, one book was missing—the disciple delivering the books from Japan had sold one to a businessman on the plane.

"Ah, this is very auspicious," Prabhupāda said. "The first book has already been distributed."

He told his disciples to sell the rest of the books, not even keeping one for himself.

But his disciples were unsure how to sell the books. Then one day two devotees got the idea to trade a book for a tank of gasoline. The station attendant readily agreed, and they became convinced that the books could be sold in other ways.

Devotees tried selling the books at concerts and found interested customers. It was exciting for them to share Kṛṣṇa in this way. They sold the book by talking about the philosophy it contained and felt deeply connected to their spiritual master by doing so.

News spread from temple to temple that distributing books was a great way to please Śrīla Prabhupāda. The excitement grew. Many locations for book distribution were attempted—shopping malls, parking lots, fairs, airports, and so on.

There were few vegetarians then, and terms such as *yoga, karma,* and *guru* were new. Americans were pledging themselves to rapid material advancement through science and technology. Yet Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, which denounce the godless life of materialistic sense gratification, poured forth like a sudden flood from an unlimited ocean.

Though Śrīla Prabhupāda departed from this world in 1977, the distribution of his books has increased, especially in the former Soviet Union and more recently in India. By some estimates, nearly one billion books have been sold.

Sown Seeds

For the last thirty years, Nidrā Dāsī has served Śrīla Prabhupāda by distributing his books in Denver.

"If a field has been well-seeded and is cultivated, watered, and so on," she explains, "it is a better field, and that is my experience now. People of all age groups are more receptive than in previous years; it is a better field for distributing Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

Because many books are "out there," whether up in attics or shelved in libraries, they continue to act on the consciousness of people who come in contact with them. Prabhupāda said that just by keeping Lord Kṛṣṇa's literature in one's home, one becomes purified.

Peter Antonakos was a small child when his father showed him an old copy of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from the household bookshelf.

"When I was sixteen," he says, "I got a copy of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* from a distributor. Śrīla Prabhupāda's words cut through my illusions and material desires. His insight really impressed me. Recently, at age nineteen, I found the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* in a used-book store. The dazzling effulgence of the golden covers left me awestruck. The images are so captivating. I read it from beginning to end."

On his college campus, Peter met Prabhupāda's disciple Gaṇapati Swami and has since taken up a life of service at the Denver temple. Several younger members of the Denver temple found old copies of Prabhupāda's books in stores or libraries and were inspired to take up the full-time practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

In 1999, Bhanu Nanduri was at the St. Louis airport when he saw a man wearing a white *dhoti* and *kurta* standing at a table covered with books.

"I was surprised to see this in the Midwest," he says. "I came to America to get my master's in electrical engineering, not for this. It was surreal. I took a paperback *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* from him and gave a donation. I had read several versions of the *Gītā* from India, but they didn't make sense to me. But when I read Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is,* right away it really got me thinking about the value of my life. I thought, 'I should be reading more of his books.'"

Eventually Bhanu ordered all of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books through Kṛṣṇa.com. At the Honolulu temple he learned to chant on beads and helped prepare for the festival of Rāma Navamī with the devotees there.

"Now my whole family is very involved with the ISKCON center in San Jose, California, where we live," says Bhanu. "I used to suffer a lot of stress and insomnia because of my job, but I'm no longer much affected by the stress of my work because I have changed my priorities. Now I attach the most importance to chanting and associating with devotees."

Advaita Ācārya Dāsa

Madhukāri Dāsa introduces Midwesterners to Prabhupāda's books.

SALOON
Sidewalk Market
KETTLE KORN
SAMPLE
ATM MACHINE
FREE SAMPLES

Karuṇa Dhāriṇī Devī Dāsī

Madhukiraṇa Dāsa talks philosophy at Ocean Front Park in Venice, California.

Book Distribution Today

Bhanu and his family, along with the rest of the devotees from the Silicon Valley congregation, are enthusiastic to be "deployed" by their temple as "Weekend Warriors." As many as two hundred members set up tables outside stores in the area, with permits from the store managers. They make attractive displays, with signs that say "Yoga and Meditation." Their tables unfurl a full display of Vaiṣṇava books, as well as cookbooks, packaged cookies, and "kiddie packs," or gifts for kids who toddle up to the tables with their parents. They also take books and kiddie packs door to door in residential neighborhoods.

They like to show people the interesting illustrations in the books, such as "Changing Bodies," "The Modes of Material Nature," and "Chariot of the Mind and Senses." These paintings leave a deep impression on those who have questions about life in this world and are looking for answers. The Silicon Valley distributors have a special program for cultivating people they meet to help them get involved right away. They call the program NETAD, for nurture, enlist, tutor, and deploy for service.

Vaiśeṣika Dāsa, Silicon Valley book-distribution strategist, explains, "When people have the experience of going out on book distribution themselves, when they are deployed, then they see for themselves how the modes of material nature work, and they also see the mercy of Lord Caitanya. These books are so extraordinary. We can see that by how they affect people's lives."

(More information on this program can be found at www.DistributeBooks.com.)

Traveling Brahmacārīs

Six *brahmacārīs* (celibate male students) who follow a string of concerts throughout North America and Canada have dedicated themselves to putting books in the hands of thousands of young concertgoers. In the summer of 2009, at forty-eight concerts they distributed an average of seven hundred books each day. They often bring large batches of *prasādam* cookies to the managers of the events, who appreciate Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and like to aid the devotees' efforts.

"This type of book distribution is wonderful," says Oṁkāra Dāsa, who traveled with the tour. "The kids we meet at the concerts are young, friendly, and open-minded."

Oṁkāra recalls an incident in which he approached a young girl who clearly wanted the book he offered to her. But her father resisted.

"I thought, 'Here I am, a missionary, offering this innocent-looking girl a book about God and spiritual knowledge, and there is her father, bringing her into a concert where meat, drugs, and alcohol are sold and consumed. What wrong can I be doing?' So I humbly pleaded with the girl's father. Eventually he relented and let her buy the book."

Another favorite form of book

distribution is called Śāstra Dāna, "giving scripture." Śāstra Dāna devotees go from business to business (or beauty salon to tattoo parlor to doctor's office to auto shop) and request the owner to keep a small selection of Prabhupāda's books on display in their waiting area. In this way the people who frequent the place get instant exposure to the books and can take one if it appeals to them. Śāstra Dāna provides a bookrack that devotees tend throughout the month by stocking it regularly and collecting money dropped into the slotted box fixed to the rack.

Volunteers of the Pancajanya Project (www.MotelGita.org) are dedicated to placing at least one million copies of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* in hotel rooms across the U.S. and Canada. Putting this classic in a traditional setting such as a motel room has made Kṛṣṇa's message available to myriad travelers who might not otherwise buy or examine them.

The Pancajanya Project started when Dilip Patel, owner of Sea Breeze Motel in Pacifica, California, began placing Prabhupāda's *Gītā* in his own rooms.

"I was surprised at the favorable reaction and comments I got from my non-Hindu guests," says Dilip, a faithful devotee of *Bhagavad-gītā* and its universal message.

Students Searching For Real Knowledge

Book distribution at colleges is welcomed by the students and professors alike. Vijaya Dāsa sets up a book table for two days at a variety of universities across America.

"Book distribution is such an adventure," says Vijaya. "You never know what's going to happen. You always meet nice people who are interested and searching for guidance. A student came by, saw my display—I have a display of karma, the cycle of life, etc.—and exclaimed, 'I never walk this direction, but something pulled me. This is it! I'm totally into everything you have here.' He was so excited to see me on campus. He received some books, I got his email address, and he recently visited the temple for the first time.

"On another occasion, I had distributed a *Bhagavad-gītā* to a student who came back to me and said, 'I had the book on my desk during class. My professor saw it, and he came over and opened it up. He bent down and whispered to me, "Have you seen the amazing pictures in this book?" Then he started showing them to me, and explaining each one.'"

Locals browse a book display in Silicon Valley.

Vijaya has collected seven hundred email addresses from select students. He sends them a weekly Kṛṣṇa conscious newsletter, invites them to their local temples, and exchanges correspondence with them.

Prabhupāda said that college students are at the best age for inquiring about the purpose of life. So it was with Steve Reynolds, an only child whose parents had treated him to every imaginable electronic toy and gadget, as well as trips overseas.

"We used to move often," Steve explains. "I remember how packing up all my stuff made me feel empty inside."

When Steve's parents divorced and his mother became very ill, he began to study different spiritual teachings. But he felt unsure about how to apply any of it. One day at the University of Arizona a friend showed Steve a copy of Prabhupāda's *Path of Perfection.* Steve and his friend took off together to find the devotee who had given his friend the little book. They saw him driving a van out of the parking lot. Though nearly run over by it, twenty-year-old Steve chased the van down and bought a *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* from the man inside, who read him one verse: "I was born in the darkness of ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torchlight of knowledge."

"I love this," Steve told the book distributor. "I want to be like you. I want to be a monk. I want to do this."

Steve has since become a full-time member of the San Diego Hare Kṛṣṇa temple. One of his many services there is giving people the transcendental gift of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. ❁

Karuṇā Dhārinī Devī Dāsī, a disciple of His Grace Vīrabāhu Dāsa, serves the deities at ISKCON Los Angeles, where she joined ISKCON in 1979. She lives with her husband and daughter.

In your own

Name one quality of Śrīla Prabhupāda's that you find particularly inspiring and illustrate it with an example from his life.

I have never found anyone more compassionate than Śrīla Prabhupāda. He saved so many people from the grip of *māyā*.

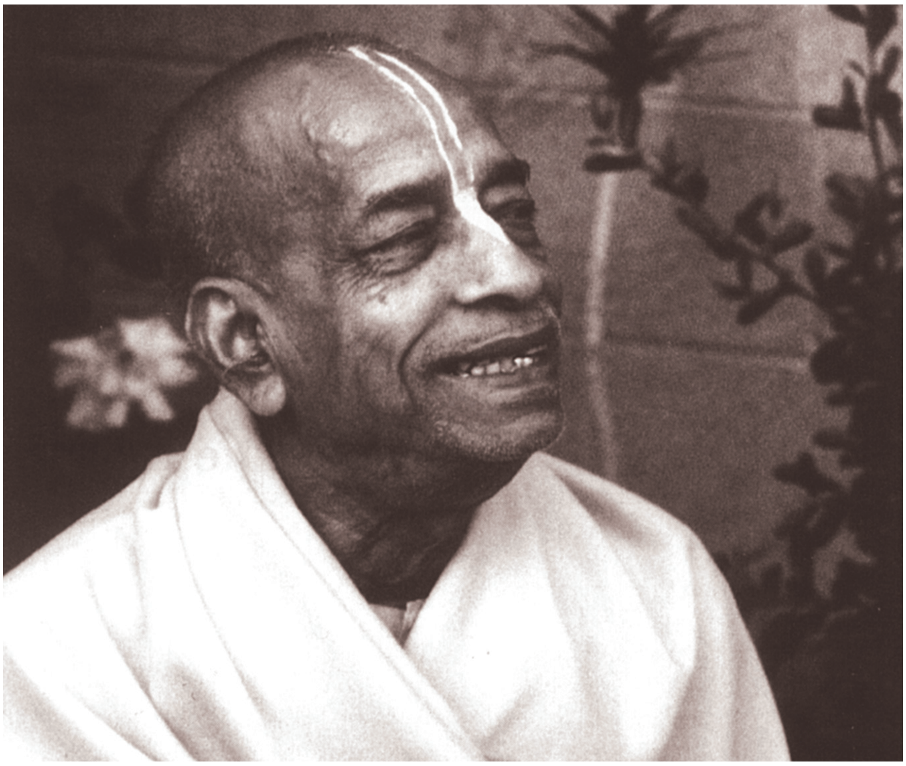
Out of compassion, he devised ways to pull devotees out of this prison, the material world, by preaching and translating the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and building temples all over the world. Nobody can repay Śrīla Prabhupāda for the great service he rendered to the whole world.

While looking at Śrīla Prabhupāda, I always feel his presence as a compassionate father. I heard about one of his disciples who had performed great service but had left ISKCON. Amazingly, at the time of his death, he suddenly shouted, "Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have come to save me!" And he left his body in peace. This shows that Śrīla Prabhupāda never forgot the service rendered by this devotee.

Sharad Purnima Nobaub
La Laura, St. Pierre, Mauritius

Prabhupāda had many titles, but he was a very simple devotee (*bhakta*) of his beloved Lord Kṛṣṇa, totally surrendered. It was impossible for him to live without that love of Kṛṣṇa; therefore he clung to Him as the sole basis of his life and received gracious gifts of the direct experience of God from God. He followed Kṛṣṇa's advice in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.14): "Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion." And he demonstrated exactly that when he went to the Western world. He was a true *ācārya*.

Jai Sharma
Begusarai, Bihar, India



I find Śrīla Prabhupāda's complete and total faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa particularly inspiring. Many times in his life Śrīla Prabhupāda faced difficulties, challenges, and obstacles that would have made any ordinary person question his faith or give up. But no matter what faced him or how difficult the instructions of his spiritual master were to carry out, Prabhupāda's faith and trust in Lord Kṛṣṇa never faltered.

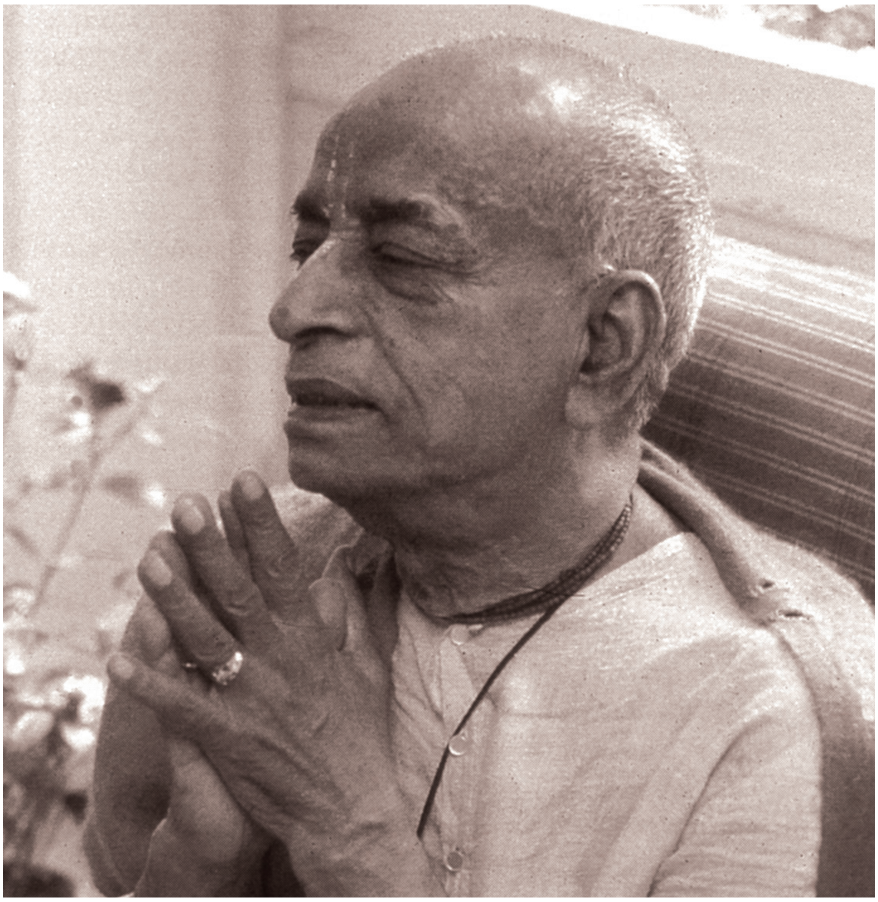
Whenever I face difficulties in my own life, and begin to question my faith or why I am a devotee, I feel inspired to think of how Prabhupāda reacted to challenges and what he had to overcome to bring knowledge of Kṛṣṇa to the West. I try always to follow his example.

Bhaktin Anna
London

When any of Prabhupāda's disciples were in the unsteady stage of devotional service and left, he didn't look down upon them. He was eager to welcome them when they returned. He was so very grateful to them for assisting him in fulfilling his spiritual master's desire and mission. Such genuine love he had. Even in his final days on this planet, he expressed gratitude to his disciples. Even if they

words . . .

Pentip photo: Andrea Leone | Agency: Dreamstime.com



had left in unsteadiness, he desired to welcome them.

Vikas Shah
Bloomington, Illinois

One quality of Prabhupāda's that I find most inspiring is his humility.

Although he was the founder of ISKCON, he did not brag about his feats. The movement he started is now enlivening devotees in every town and village around the world. Although he sacrificed so much to build a shelter the whole world could live in, he remained at the background, without consideration of personal honor.

An example to illustrate Śrīla Prabhupāda's humility: When one of his disciples thanked him for writing so many books on the subject of Kṛṣṇa, Prabhupāda burst into tears and said, "I have not written these books. Kṛṣṇa has written these books. It is simply through the mercy of my Guru Mahārāja and Kṛṣṇa that I am able to present to you this transcendental knowledge."

Mohit Kapoor
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Śrīla Prabhupāda's compassion is particularly inspiring.

He was comfortably situated in Vrindavan as a respected *sannyāsī,* living among the resident Vraja-vāsīs, who have no other business but to serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in unconditional love. To live in Vrindavan on Earth is to live in the highest abode of Kṛṣṇa, Goloka Vṛndāvana. To die in Vṛndāvana is to attain liberation in Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Some Vraja-vāsīs don't leave Vrindavan to even go to neighboring Mathura. Yet Śrīla Prabhupāda, his heart overflowing with pure love for Kṛṣṇa and pure compassion for all living entities, left Vrindavan to travel to New York City's slums. He left the heaven of Vrindavan to go to a place with a hellish atmosphere, ruled by illicit drugs, promiscuous sex, and rampant violence. He rescued countless souls, giving them Vrindavan's eternal shelter.

Hardik Kaswala
Unadilla, Georgia

Śrīla Prabhupāda's main quality was his selfless surrender

unto his guru and the lotus feet of the Lord. Because of his truly pure *bhakti,* Kṛṣṇa gave him the strength to persuade materialistic people. He converted hippies into surrendered devotees, showing that Kṛṣṇa blessed his voice and every word that came from his mouth. Even now when I hear his audio, I feel the same blessed feeling felt by the early devotees. I am a fortunate living entity because of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Rajan Bhardwaj
Kota, Rajasthan, India ✿

HERE'S THE NEXT QUESTION:

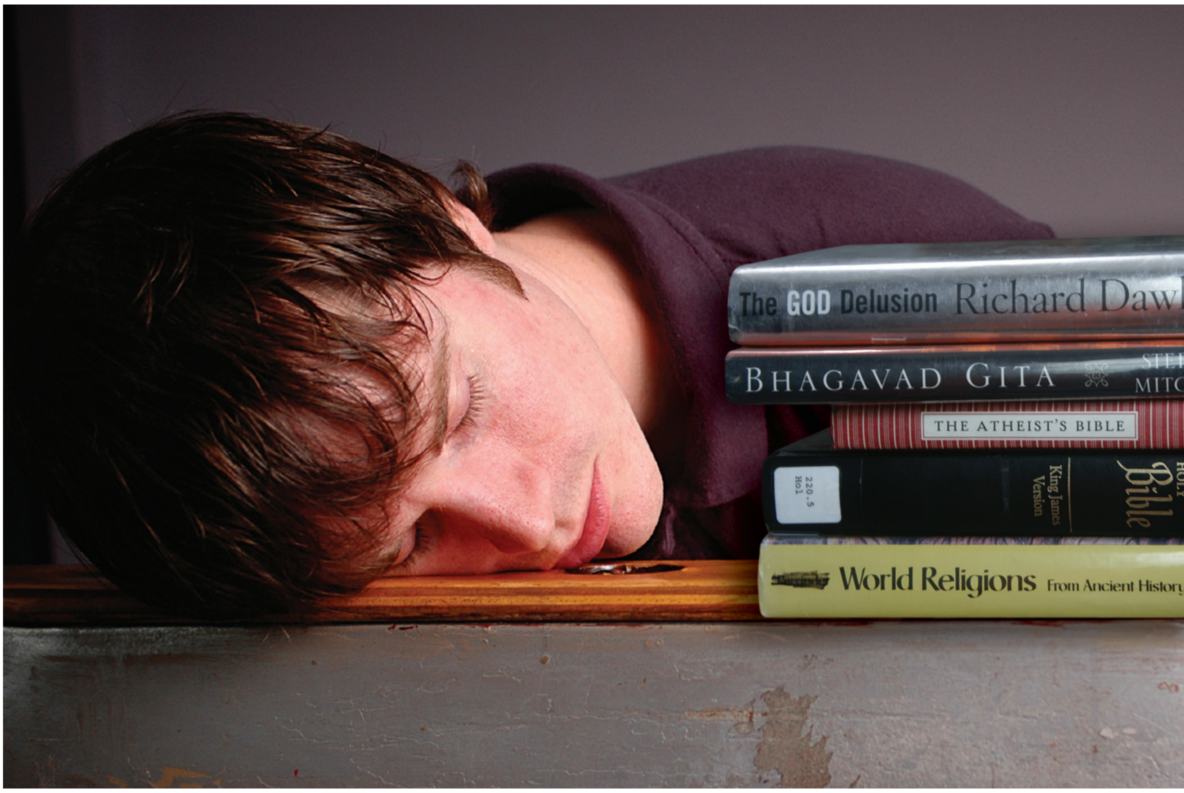
What can we do to reciprocate with Śrīla Prabhupāda for what he has given us?

Go to Krishna.com/in-your-own-words and let us know. Please keep your answer to under 150 words. Replies will appear in the Mar/Apr 2011 issue. Deadline for submissions is Dec 1.

APATHEISM: A New Trend in Wishy-Washy

By Satyarāja Dāsa

THERE'S A NEW theological term being bandied about by scholars and historians of religion: apatheism. It refers to people who just don't care, particularly when it comes to God. And if you think about it, that's not a select few. In our modern age of quarrel and hypocrisy, people in general really don't care about God—they don't care to discuss Him, think about Him, or consider if He exists.



Photographer: Susan Quinland-Stringer / Agency: Dreamstime.com

Unlike agnosticism, with which one might readily compare it, apatheism takes no position on whether God exists, or on whether one can know if there is a God or not. It simply states . . . nothing. It's indifferent, implying, at least on a subtle level, that God is irrelevant, a thing of the past, a nuisance not worth our time. "Why even think about it? Why even care?"

As philosopher Jonathan Rauch explains in his recent article in *The Atlantic* ("Let it Be," April 3, 2010):

> Apatheism concerns not what you believe but how. In that respect it differs from the standard concepts used to describe religious views and people. Atheism, for instance, is not at all like apatheism; the hot-blooded atheist cares as much about religion as does the evangelical Christian, but in the opposite direction. . . . Tolerance is a magnificent concept, John Locke's inestimable gift to all mankind; but it assumes, as Locke did, that everyone brims with religious passions that everyone else must work hard to put up with.

Frankly, the entire idea lacks merit. It is almost understandable to disbelieve in God—based on disappointment or a bleak worldview. Or to propose that it is impossible to know for certain whether or not God exists. But if one concedes that a Supreme Being does indeed exist, then how does it make any sense to ignore Him or say that He is unimportant? This is His world; He created it. Consider this: If you visit someone's home, doesn't it make sense to know who your host is and to have cordial dealings with him or her? What are we doing here if we don't know who the proprietor is? And if there is any mystery to existence—and there clearly is—it seems knowing God would be a large step toward solving that mystery.

Primordial Apathy

Of course, apathy toward God is not a new thing. In many ways, it's the very source of material existence.

Disbelief

When living beings become indifferent to God, they become bound to material existence. And a primary function of *māyā,* the illusory energy, is to allow them to do so. We want to be an imitation God, the material world is created so we can play out our delusional drama, and we incarnate, time and again, for that very purpose. In an interview published in *The Harmonist,* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura said:

Boy sleeping: © Rosemarie Gearhart | istockphoto.com; books and montage: Yamarāja Dāsa

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> This inferior potency has been stupefying the *jīvas* [souls] that are apathetic towards God since before the beginning of time and causing misunderstanding in them, sometimes assuming the form of "twenty-four items of entity" of Kapila (the originator of the Sāṅkhya system), sometimes as the "atom" of Kaṇāda (of the Vaiśeṣika system), sometimes also as Jaiminī's principle of "elevation" (in the Pūrva Mīmāṁsa system), sometimes again as the "sixteen objects" of Gautama (in the Nyāya system), sometimes as "superhuman power and absolute oneness with God" of Patañjalī (of the Yoga system), and sometimes as the pretence of search after Brahman (of the Śaṅkara school).

What all of this means in simple English is that numerous schools of thought—Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura here enumerates the major schools in India as examples—were conceived so that living beings could forget God or develop apathy toward Him, thus allowing them to play out their imitation Godhood.

Modern atheists, agnostics, and, yes, apatheists partake of many of the same notions as these traditional Indian thinkers and their schools, if in a less systematic fashion. But the conclusion is always the same: How can I forget the fact that I am constitutionally a servant of God and that life is meant for serving Him?

After all, who really wants to be apathetic about something (or someone) as important as God? He is our source and gives life real purpose.

The Living Dead

The word *apathy* has Greek origins and literally means "without feelings." Can one experience life—be truly alive—without feeling? Victor Hugo wrote, "It's nothing to die; it's frightful not to live." In other words, it is more than the act of dying that frightens us—it is the prospect of not living. Are the apathetic really alive, or are they, in a sense, the living dead? As the German social psychologist Erich Fromm phrased it, "In the 19th century, the problem was that God is dead; in the 20th century the problem is that man is dead."

Apathy is a double-edged sword that wounds both the apathetic and the society in which they live. Apathy has horrific negative power. And apatheism is the worst form of apathy, because it's directed toward the entity who most warrants our attention, our concern, our interest.

What causes apathy? It is usually frustration and a sense of powerlessness, making people withdraw from life or give up on things that could be important—like God. However, the ultimate cause is their attitude, the way they react to the world and things around them. The cause of apathy is not any particular thing itself, but people's conditioned response to everything.

As Rauch tells us in his *Atlantic* article:

> In America . . . the proportion of people who say they never go to church or synagogue has tripled since 1972, to 33 percent in 2000. Most of these people believe in God (professed atheists are very rare in the United States); they just don't care much about him. They do care a bit; but apatheism is an attitude, not a belief system, and the over-riding fact is that these people are relaxed about religion.
>
> Even regular churchgoers can, and often do, rank quite high on the apatheism scale. There are a lot of reasons to attend religious services: to connect with a culture or a community, to socialize, to expose children to religion, to find the warming comfort of familiar ritual. The softer denominations in America are packed with apatheists.

Rauch's words are insightful. He enumerates well the shallow reasons for approaching God. These reasons are not wrong or inappropriate; they are just inferior. Prabhupāda talks about this as well:

> This is . . . the recommendation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.6) . . . : "The supreme occupation [*dharma*] for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendent Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self."
>
> *Yato bhaktir adhokṣaje.* The word *bhakti* comes from the same root as *bhaj,* the root of the word *bhajate* [worship]. The test of a first-class religion is whether or not we are developing our love for God. If we practice religion with some ulterior motive, hoping to fulfill our material necessities, our religion is not first class but third class. It must be understood that first-class religion is that by which we can develop our love of Godhead. *Ahaituky apratihatā.* This perfect religion should be executed without ulterior motive or impediment. That is the yoga system recommended in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and in

> this Sixth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā.* That is the system of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
>
> (*The Path of Yoga,* Chapter 8)

In short, people become apathetic toward God because they approach Him for lesser reasons. As Hari Śauri Dāsa, who spent a considerable amount of time as Prabhupāda's personal secretary, writes:

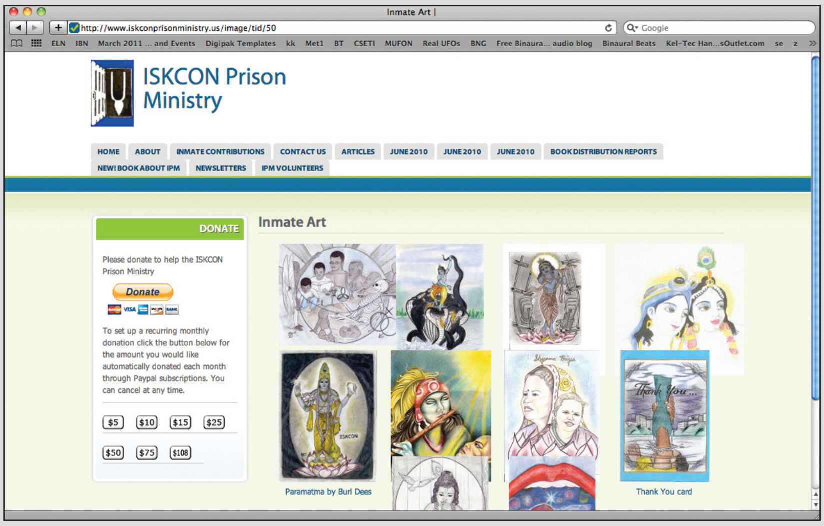
> Prabhupāda went on for some time, condemning the attitude with which people generally approach God. He explained that in India they sing a traditional *ārati* song which repeats the words *sab ko sampatti de bhagavān. De bhagavān* means "God, give me." And in the West, he explained, the Christians also have the same idea. "The whole world," Prabhupāda observed, "they have accepted God as order supplier: I order, You supply. The Christian church also, "God, give us our daily bread."
>
> (*A Transcendental Diary,* Vol. 1)

This is the real cause of apatheism: not knowing who God is or how to approach Him. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement was conceived to remedy this situation. If we become acquainted with the all-attractive form of Kṛṣṇa, apathy will remain a million miles away. If we learn how to enthusiastically engage in His service—instead of asking what He can do for us—apathetic spirituality will fall to the wayside. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the surest cure for apatheism. One need merely try it to see for oneself.

Satyarāja Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, is a BTG associate editor. He has written over twenty books on Kṛṣṇa conciousness and lives near New York City.

e-Krishna

Profiles of Kṛṣṇa-related websites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Please donate to help the ISKCON Prison Ministry

To set up a recurring monthly donation click the button below for the amount you would like automatically donated each month through Paypal subscriptions. You can cancel at any time.

The ISKCON Prison Ministry (IPM)—The website **www.iskconprisonministry.us** is a central place for information about the ministry's activities in the United States.

"The ISKCON Prison Ministry focuses on helping prison inmates develop their Kṛṣṇa consciousness," Bhakti-latā Devī Dāsī of IPM says. "We do that by corresponding with hundreds of inmates and sending them Prabhupāda's books. At the website, visitors can get first-hand knowledge of the effect Kṛṣṇa consciousness has on inmates by reading from their letters."

There are articles to read and a variety of inmate contributions, such as poetry, essays, and Kṛṣṇa conscious art—all from inside prison.

Have a look at the newsletters and book-distribution reports, and read the section where prison chaplains express their appreciation of IPM and the programs devotees conduct in their prisons. Read about the book *Holy Jail,* compiled by Candramauli Swami, which documents the history and activities of the ISKCON Prison Ministry.

The website is also a channel for volunteers. Click on IPM Volunteers and find out ways you can help, such as giving money, books, or devotional paraphernalia. You can also write letters to prisoners interested in learning about Kṛṣṇa consciousness and turning their lives around. You may even feel inspired to visit *bhaktas* in jails and prisons.

"Since the website was set up, many devotees have expressed their appreciation for the service IPM is doing," Bhakti-latā says. "Devotees have stepped forward to become transcendental pen-pals."

IPM hopes the website will inspire many devotees to correspond with inmates.

"I encourage anyone who feels at ease with writing to try this service," Bhakti-latā says. "You can teach Kṛṣṇa consciousness from the comfort of your home."

IPM drastically changes people's lives. Click the Contact tab and let the IPM know how you'd like to help.

—*Antony Brennan*

BOOK SECTION: ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Referred to as “the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature,” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa,* or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

DHRUVA MAHĀRĀJA RETURNS

After speaking his regrets for having had material desires, Dhruva Mahārāja returns home to the palace.

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 9

34 मयैतत्प्रार्थितं व्यर्थं चिकित्सेव गतायुषि
प्रसाद्य जगदात्मानं तपसा दुष्प्रसादनम्
भवच्छिदमयाचेऽहं भवं भाग्यविवर्जितः

mayaitat prārthitaṁ vyarthaṁ
cikitseva gatāyuṣi
prasādya jagad-ātmānaṁ
tapasā duṣprasādanam
bhava-cchidam ayāce ’haṁ
bhavaṁ bhāgya-vivarjitaḥ

mayā—by me; *etat*—this; *prārthitam*—prayed for; *vyartham*—uselessly; *cikitsā*—treatment; *iva*—like; *gata*—has ended; *āyuṣi*—for one whose life; *prasādya*—after satisfying; *jagat-ātmānam*—the soul of the universe; *tapasā*—by austerity; *duṣprasādanam*—who is very difficult to satisfy; *bhava-chidam*—the Personality of Godhead, who can cut the chain of birth and death; *ayāce*—prayed for; *aham*—I; *bhavam*—repetition of birth and death; *bhāgya*—fortune; *vivarjitaḥ*—being without.

It is very difficult to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but in my case, although I have satisfied the Supersoul of the whole universe, I have prayed only for useless things. My activities were exactly like treatment given to a person who is already dead. Just see how unfortunate I am, for in spite of meeting the Supreme Lord, who can cut one’s link with birth and death, I have prayed for the same conditions again.

PURPORT: Sometimes it so happens that a devotee engaged in the loving service of the Lord desires some material benefit in exchange for this service. This is not the proper way to discharge devotional service. Out of ignorance, of course, sometimes a devotee does so, but Dhruva Mahārāja regrets his personal behavior in this connection.

35 स्वाराज्यं यच्छतो मौढ्यान्मानो मे भिक्षितो बत
ईश्वरात्क्षीणपुण्येन फलीकारानिवाधनः

svārājyaṁ yacchato mauḍhyān
māno me bhikṣito bata
īśvarāt kṣīṇa-puṇyena
phalī-kārān ivādhanaḥ

svārājyam—His devotional service; *yacchataḥ*—from the Lord, who was willing to offer; *mauḍhyāt*—by foolishness; *mānaḥ*—material prosperity; *me*—by me; *bhikṣitaḥ*—was asked for; *bata*—alas; *īśvarāt*—from a great emperor; *kṣīṇa*—reduced; *puṇyena*—whose pious activities; *phalī-kārān*—broken particles of husked rice; *iva*—like; *adhanaḥ*—a poor man.

① Because of my state of complete foolishness and paucity of pious activities, although the Lord offered me His personal service I wanted material name, fame, and prosperity. ② My case is just like that of the poor man who, when he satisfied a great emperor who wanted to give him anything he might ask, out of ignorance asked only a few broken grains of husked rice.

PURPORT: In this verse the word *svārājyam,* which means "complete independence," is very significant. A conditioned soul does not know what complete independence is. ③ Complete independence means situation in one's own constitutional position. The real independence of a living entity, who is part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is to remain always dependent on the Supreme Lord, just like a child who plays in complete independence, guided by his parents, who watch over him. The independence of the conditioned soul does not mean to fight with the obstacles offered by *māyā,* but to surrender to Kṛṣṇa.

④ In the material world, everyone is trying to become completely independent simply by fighting against the obstacles offered by *māyā.* This is called the struggle for existence. Real independence is to be reinstated in the service of the Lord. Anyone who goes to the Vaikuṇṭha planets or Goloka Vṛndāvana planet is freely offering his service to the Lord. That is complete independence. Just contrary to this is material overlordship, which we wrongly take to be independence. Many great political leaders have tried to establish independence, but due to such so-called independence the people's dependence has only increased. The living entity cannot be happy trying to be independent in the material world. One has to surrender, therefore, unto the lotus feet of the Lord and engage in his original, eternal service.

(1) To what does Dhruva Mahārāja attribute his desire for material name, fame, and prosperity?
(2) In the example Dhruva gives, what did the pauper ask of the emperor?
(3) What is complete independence?
(4) In the material world, how is everyone trying to become completely independent?
(5) What is the only thing that pure devotees ask from the Lord?
(6) In what ways, respectively, do *karmīs, jñānīs,* and yogis endeavor for their own happiness?

Dhruva Mahārāja regrets that he wanted material opulence and greater prosperity than that of his great-grandfather, Lord Brahmā. His begging from the Lord was like a poor man's asking a great emperor for a few grains of broken rice. The conclusion is that anyone who is engaged in the loving service of the Lord should never ask for material prosperity from the Lord. The awarding of material prosperity simply depends on the stringent rules and regulations of the external energy. ⑤ Pure devotees ask the Lord only for the privilege of serving Him. This is our real independence. If we want anything else, it is a sign of our misfortune.

मैत्रेय उवाच
36 न वै मुकुन्दस्य पदारविन्दयो
रजोजुषस्तात भवादृशा जनाः
वाञ्छन्ति तद्दास्यमृतेऽर्थमात्मनो
यदृच्छया लब्धमनः समृद्धयः

maitreya uvāca
na vai mukundasya padāravindayo
rajo-juṣas tāta bhavādṛśā janāḥ
vāñchanti tad-dāsyam ṛte 'rtham ātmano
yadṛcchayā labdha-manaḥ-samṛddhayaḥ

maitreyaḥ uvāca—the great sage Maitreya continued; *na*—never; *vai*—certainly; *mukundasya*—of the Lord, who can give liberation; *pada-aravindayoḥ*—of the lotus feet; *rajaḥ-juṣaḥ*—persons who are eager to taste the dust; *tāta*—my dear Vidura; *bhavādṛśāḥ*—like yourself; *janāḥ*—persons; *vāñchanti*—desire; *tat*—His; *dāsyam*—servitorship; *ṛte*—without; *artham*—interest; *ātmanaḥ*—for themselves; *yadṛcchayā*—automatically; *labdha*—by what is achieved; *manaḥ-samṛddhayaḥ*—considering themselves very rich.

The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, persons like you, who are pure devotees of the lotus feet of Mukunda [the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who can offer liberation] and who are always attached to the honey of His lotus feet, are always satisfied in serving at the lotus feet of the Lord. In any condition of life, such persons remain satisfied, and thus they never ask the Lord for material prosperity.

PURPORT: In the *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says that He is the supreme enjoyer, the supreme proprietor of everything and anything within this creation, and the supreme friend of everyone. When one knows these things perfectly, he is always satisfied. The pure devotee never hankers after any kind of material prosperity. The *karmīs,* however, or *jñānīs* or yogis endeavor always for their own personal happiness. ⑥ *Karmīs* work day and night to improve their economic condition, *jñānīs* undergo severe austerities in order to get liberation, and yogis also undergo severe austerities by practicing the yoga system for attainment of wonderful mystic powers. A devotee, however, is not interested in such activities; he does not want mystic powers or liberation or material prosperity. ⑦ He is satisfied in any condition of life, as long as he is constantly engaged in the service of the Lord.

The Lord's feet are compared to the lotus, wherein there is saffron dust. A devotee is always engaged in drinking the honey from the lotus feet of the Lord. ⑧ Unless one is freed from all material desires, he cannot actually taste the honey from the Lord's lotus feet. One has to discharge his devotional duties without being disturbed by the coming and going of material circumstances. This desirelessness for material prosperity is called *niṣkāma.* One should not mistakenly think that *niṣkāma* means giving up all desires. That is impossible. A living entity is eternally existent, and he cannot give up desires. A living entity must have desires; that is the symptom of life. ⑨ When there is a recommendation to become desireless, it is to be understood that this means that we should not desire anything for our sense gratification. For a devotee this state of mind, *niḥspṛha,* is the right position. Actually every one of us already has an arrangement for our standard of material comforts. A devotee should always remain satisfied with the standard of comforts offered by the Lord, as stated in the *Īśopaniṣad* (*tena tyaktena bhuñjīthāḥ*). This saves time for executing Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

37 आकर्ण्यात्मजमायान्तं सम्परेत्य यथागतम्
राजा न श्रद्दधे भद्रमभद्रस्य कुतो मम

ākarṇyātma-jam āyāntaṁ
samparetya yathāgatam
rājā na śraddadhe bhadram
abhadrasya kuto mama

ākarṇya—having heard; *ātma-jam*—his son; *āyāntam*—coming back; *samparetya*—after dying; *yathā*—as if; *āgatam*—coming back; *rājā*—King Uttānapāda; *na*—did not; *śraddadhe*—have any confidence; *bhadram*—good fortune; *abhadrasya*—of the impious; *kutaḥ*—whence; *mama*—my.

When King Uttānapāda heard that his son Dhruva was coming back home, as if coming back to life after death, he could not put his faith in this message, for he was doubtful of how it could happen. He considered himself the most wretched, and therefore he thought that it was not possible for him to attain such good fortune.

PURPORT: ⑩ Dhruva Mahārāja, a five-year-old boy, went to the forest for penance and austerity, and the King could not at all believe that a small boy of such a tender age could live in the forest. He was certain that Dhruva was dead. He therefore could not fix his faith in the message that Dhruva Mahārāja was coming back home again. For him this message said that a dead man was coming back home, and so he could not believe it. After Dhruva Mahārāja's departure from home, King Uttānapāda thought that he was the cause of Dhruva's leaving, and thus he considered himself the most wretched. Therefore, even though it was possible that his lost son was coming back from the kingdom of death, he thought that since he was most sinful it was not possible for him to be so fortunate as to get back his lost son.

38 श्रद्धाय वाक्यं देवर्षेर्हर्षवेगेन धर्षितः
वार्ताहर्तुरतिप्रीतो हारं प्रादान्महाधनम्

śraddhāya vākyaṁ devarṣer
harṣa-vegena dharṣitaḥ
vārtā-hartur atiprīto
hāraṁ prādān mahā-dhanam

śraddhāya—keeping faith; *vākyam*—in the words; *devarṣeḥ*—of the great sage Nārada; *harṣa-vegena*—by great satisfaction; *dharṣitaḥ*—overwhelmed; *vārtā-hartuḥ*—with the messenger who brought the news; *atiprītaḥ*—being very satisfied; *hāram*—a pearl necklace; *prādāt*—offered; *mahā-dhanam*—very valuable.

Although he could not believe the words of the messenger, he had full faith in the word of the great sage Nārada. Thus he was greatly overwhelmed by the news, and he immediately offered the messenger a highly valuable necklace in great satisfaction.

39 सदश्वं रथमारुह्य कार्तस्वरपरिष्कृतम्
ब्राह्मणैः कुलवृद्धैश्च पर्यस्तोऽमात्यबन्धुभिः
40 शङ्खदुन्दुभिनादेन ब्रह्मघोषेण वेणुभिः
निश्चक्राम पुरात्तूर्णमात्मजाभीक्षणोत्सुकः

sad-aśvaṁ ratham āruhya
kārtasvara-pariṣkṛtam
brāhmaṇaiḥ kula-vṛddhaiś ca
paryasto 'mātya-bandhubhiḥ

śaṅkha-dundubhi-nādena
brahma-ghoṣeṇa veṇubhiḥ
niścakrāma purāt tūrṇam
ātmajābhīkṣaṇotsukaḥ

(7) Why is a devotee satisfied in any condition of life?
(8) What qualifies one to taste the honey from the Lord's lotus feet?
(9) What does it mean to become desireless?
(10) Why could King Uttānapāda not believe that Dhruva was returning home?

sat-aśvam—drawn by very fine horses; *ratham*—chariot; *āruhya*—getting on; *kārtasvara-pariṣkṛtam*—bedecked with golden filigree; *brāhmaṇaiḥ*—with *brāhmaṇas; kula-vṛddhaiḥ*—along with elderly personalities of the family; *ca*—also; *paryastaḥ*—being surrounded; *amātya*—by officers and ministers; *bandhubhiḥ*—and friends; *śaṅkha*—of conchshells; *dundubhi*—and kettledrums; *nā-dena*—with the sound; *brahma-ghoṣeṇa*—by the chanting of Vedic mantras; *veṇubhiḥ*—by flutes; *niścakrāma*—he came out; *purāt*—from the city; *tūrṇam*—with great haste; *ātma-ja*—son; *abhīkṣaṇa*—to see; *utsukaḥ*—very eager.

Then King Uttānapāda, being very eager to see the face of his lost son, mounted a chariot drawn by excellent horses and bedecked with golden filigree. Taking with him many learned brāhmaṇas, all the elderly personalities of his family, his officers, his ministers, and his immediate friends, he immediately left the city. As he proceeded in this parade, there were auspicious sounds of conchshells, kettledrums, flutes, and the chanting of Vedic mantras to indicate all good fortune.

41 सुनीतिः सुरुचिश्चास्य महिष्यौ रुक्मभूषिते
आरुह्य शिबिकां सार्धमुत्तमेनाभिजग्मतुः

sunītiḥ suruciś cāsya
mahiṣyau rukma-bhūṣite
āruhya śibikāṁ sārdham
uttamenābhijagmatuḥ

sunītiḥ—Queen Sunīti; *suruciḥ*—Queen Suruci; *ca*—also; *asya*—of the King; *mahiṣyau*—queens; *rukma-bhūṣite*—being decorated with golden ornaments; *āruhya*—getting on; *śibikām*—a palanquin; *sārdham*—along with; *uttamena*—the King's other son, Uttama; *abhijagmatuḥ*—all proceeded along.

Both the queens of King Uttānapāda, namely Sunīti and Suruci, along with his other son, Uttama, appeared in the procession. The queens were seated on a palanquin.

PURPORT: After the departure of Dhruva Mahārāja from the palace, the King was very afflicted, but by the kind words of Saint Nārada he was partially satisfied. He could understand the great fortune of his wife Sunīti and the great misfortune of Queen Suruci, for these facts were certainly very open in the palace. ⑪ But still when the news reached the palace that Dhruva Mahārāja was returning, his mother, Sunīti, out of her great compassion and due to being the mother of a great Vaiṣṇava, did not hesitate to take the other wife, Suruci, and her son, Uttama, on the same palanquin. That was the greatness of Queen Sunīti, the mother of the great Vaiṣṇava Dhruva Mahārāja.

(11) How did Queen Sunīti show her greatness when Dhruva returned from the forest?
(12) When King Uttānapāda embraced Dhruva, how had Dhruva changed?

42 तं दृष्ट्वोपवनाभ्याश आयान्तं तरसा रथात्
अवरुह्य नृपस्तूर्णमासाद्य प्रेमविह्वलः
43 परिरेभेऽङ्गजं दोर्भ्यां दीर्घोत्कण्ठमनाः श्वसन्
विष्वक्सेनाङ्घ्रिसंस्पर्शहताशेषाघबन्धनम्

taṁ dṛṣṭvopavanābhyāśa
āyāntaṁ tarasā rathāt
avaruhya nṛpas tūrṇam
āsādya prema-vihvalaḥ
parirebhe 'ṅgajaṁ dorbhyāṁ
dīrghotkaṇṭha-manāḥ śvasan
viṣvaksenāṅghri-saṁsparśa-
hatāśeṣāgha-bandhanam

tam—him (Dhruva Mahārāja); *dṛṣṭvā*—having seen; *upavana*—the small forest; *abhyāśe*—near; *āyāntam*—returning; *tarasā*—with great haste; *rathāt*—from the chariot; *avaruhya*—got down; *nṛpaḥ*—the King; *tūrṇam*—immediately; *āsādya*—coming near; *prema*—with love; *vihvalaḥ*—overwhelmed; *parirebhe*—he embraced; *aṅga-jam*—his son; *dorbhyām*—with his arms; *dīrgha*—for a long time; *utkaṇṭha*—anxious; *manāḥ*—the King, whose mind; *śvasan*—breathing heavily; viṣvaksena—of the Lord; *aṅghri*—by the lotus feet; *saṁsparśa*—being touched; *hata*—were destroyed; *aśeṣa*—unlimited; *agha*—material contamination; *bandhanam*—whose bondage.

Upon seeing Dhruva Mahārāja approaching the neighboring small forest, King Uttānapāda with great haste got down from his chariot. He had been very anxious for a long time to see his son Dhruva, and therefore with great love and affection he went forward to embrace his long-lost boy. Breathing very heavily, the King embraced him with both arms. ⑫ But Dhruva Mahārāja was not the same as before; he was completely sanctified by spiritual advancement due to having been touched by the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

44 अथाजिघ्रन्मुहुर्मूर्ध्नि शीतैर्नयनवारिभिः
स्नापयामास तनयं जातोद्दाममनोरथः

athājighran muhur mūrdhni
śītair nayana-vāribhiḥ
snāpayām āsa tanayaṁ
jātoddāma-manorathaḥ

[*Continued in the next issue.*]

HOW I CAME TO KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS

Back on the Path Back Home

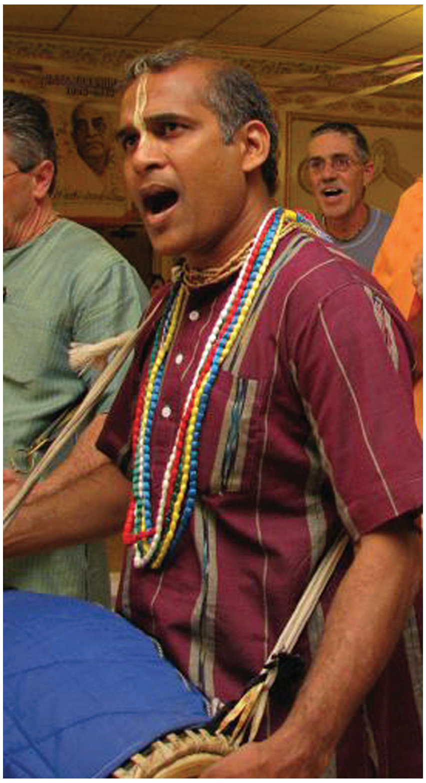
After a long and regrettable detour, an Indian immigrant to America gets back on track with help from Śrīla Prabhupāda and his movement.

By Sai Bhupalam

I WAS BORN in 1963 and raised in a pious middle-class family of six in Hyderabad, India. Being a boy and also the youngest had its advantages. I would do my own thing most of the time while my older siblings would labor with household chores. We celebrated festivals with much pomp and gathered with all our cousins to revel in the spirit of the occasion. As devotees of Śrī Lakṣmī-Narasiṁhadeva (Kṛṣṇa's half-man, half-lion incarnation and His consort), we visited Their beautiful temple regularly, and the priest knew our family well.

Educating us in the concepts of karma and stories of Lord Viṣṇu, Mom would teach us prayers, play harmonium, and sing devotional songs after we were done with homework. As Dad used to travel a lot, Mom raised us by herself. Apart from getting straight A's at school, we were expected to succeed with a great career and find our place in the world.

By the time I was sixteen, my dad's hard work paid off and we moved to our own home in an elite suburban neighborhood. Most kids in the area were from rich families. They drank, smoked, ate meat, took drugs, and aped the Western lifestyle. That was considered hip and was the ticket to being accepted. So I started playing the guitar to be the coolest teenager in the neighborhood and embraced the norm. I went to college to study mathematics, physics, and chemistry.



Jim Morrison and the Doors became my heroes—do I need to say more about my lifestyle? Through all this I somehow managed straight A's and graduated college. I joined the travel industry, became a flight attendant, and moved to Mumbai. I was twenty-two, making great money by Indian standards, and had no one to hold me back. With access to lots of sensual pleasures and a ton of free time, I indulged in whatever pleased me and flew first class wherever I traveled. I was eating every kind of meat, drinking the world's so-called best liquors, and smoking Marlboros (I had always liked the cowboys and horses in their advertisements). Going to late-night discos was part of the routine, as all the hotels we stayed at had them. Life seemed great.

But I found out in a few years that the much-desired life of drinking, sleeping late, living luxuriously, and chasing sense gratification was giving me little or no pleasure. I had hit a saturation point, but I still did not know what would keep me happy, peaceful, and satisfied, nor did I know how to escape my bad habits. After a few years, the answer finally came to me.

Not Yet Ready

One day while I was bored in my fancy hotel room, I pulled out my bedside drawer and found a *Bhagavad-gītā* inside. I recalled my dad's words: "Why don't you read the *Bhagavad-gītā* instead of all these Western novels?" So I took it out and started reading. But after a couple of pages, I was done. Nothing made sense. It must have been a bad translation, or maybe my senses were too contaminated. Probably both.

In my early thirties, I found a sales job that took me to San Diego in 1996. I was a Type A and was so focused on my success that for several years I did not take a vacation and became the top national performer in the company. Success creates envy and enemies in the corporate world, and soon things were being taken away from me at every possible opportunity. To deal with the stress, I ran races, including a marathon and a half marathon, and practiced *aṣṭāṅga-yoga,* but I felt empty despite my success. Because of the pressures of the workplace, some nights I couldn't sleep more than two hours.

Fortunately, I found myself attending a series of lectures on the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa at an Indian temple. The stories I had heard in my childhood came back to me with a renewed perspective. I was taken by the message and the essence of these talks. They gave me a sense of peace, and I yearned for more of that nectar. On Janmāṣṭamī (Kṛṣṇa's appearance day) that year, the priest asked me to play guitar along with other musicians while he sang songs (*bhajanas*). I started doing that at home as well. It felt really good and was a drug-free stress reliever.

Finding Prabhupāda's Gītā

After a few weeks, I wandered into a used-book store one day to look for books on yoga and came across a copy of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is.* For the first time I could understand enough to want to know more. Śrīla Prabhupāda's approach to the translation made it easy to digest. He explained the teachings at a level that someone like me, so deeply embedded in the Western culture, could understand. I felt that a turning point had come in my life. I understood why the pleasures derived from sense gratification, such as drinking, eating meat, and womanizing, not only do not give you lasting happiness, but actually create more problems in your life. To have lasting or increasing happiness, I discovered, I must engage my talents and senses in Kṛṣṇa's service.

Soon I was craving to have my own set of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with Śrīla Prabhupāda's translation and commentary. I searched the Internet and discovered that I could get it at the San Diego ISKCON temple. Mahat-Tattva Dāsa, now temple president, invited me to the Sunday feast at the temple and told me I could pick up my books that night. He even helped carry them to my car. Soon I was inspired to read *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta.* I did not miss a single Sunday feast for the next three years and am still a regular after five years in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I do not see this changing —Sunday is now my best day of the week.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's translations and commentaries were so enlightening and reassuring that they had a calming effect. The devotees' recommendations to read his books, associate with devotees, and eat *prasādam* were easy to follow. I would wonder why the devotees did not have a program like the Sunday feast more than just once a week.

Talking with more experienced devotees helped me understand the books better. Some of them were very eager to help me progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, so I confided in them about my work issues and the personal challenges hindering my progress. One of them was so kind that we would talk on the phone some weeknights even though he was taking care of his ill mother. That helped me through some tough times.

I noticed that there were many professionals and extremely intelligent and opulent people in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement but that their priorities were different from those of others. Their lives were centered on Kṛṣṇa. I had never seen this before, especially in the West. Their enthusiasm was contagious. Soon I found that I just could not stay away from the temple.

Their lives were centered on Kṛṣṇa. I had never seen this before, especially in the West. Their enthusiasm was contagious.

Life Changes

I started chanting one round a day on my beads, went to five, sixteen, and soon to twenty-one. Association with devotees, Sunday feast *kīrtanas,* and Kṛṣṇa *prasādam* put my life back where it needed to be. I was able to make many necessary changes to get away from a situation detrimental to my spiritual practice and my life.

My goals became streamlined and crystal clear. I lost all passion for intense yoga asanas and did not need to run thirty-five miles a week. I realized that Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the association of Kṛṣṇa's devotees can eliminate the need for such intense bodily fixes, a need so common in the West. I would often hear my American friends mention their therapist as if it is a necessary part of life for everyone to see a psychiatrist regularly. I wished they would read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.

I noticed that my mental cobwebs gradually started clearing out. I became a total vegetarian once again, got rid of my wine collection, and even gave up drinking caffeine. It was amazing to see the shift in perspective and priorities. I realized that just keeping fit, eating healthy, and avoiding alcohol did not mean much until it was all dovetailed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is the real catalyst to a successful formula.

A lot of the fears and issues that had plagued me suddenly seemed baseless. For instance, lately the fact that I am not married although I am in my forties does not bother me. I feel absolutely fine leaving it up to Kṛṣṇa to steer my life in the direction He feels is best for me. My typical day now starts with *ārati,* chanting sixteen rounds, and reading *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is.* I read the *Bhāgavatam* at night and chant another five rounds before going to bed.

If only I had found Prabhupāda's books earlier! I often regret that, and I apologize to Kṛṣṇa for all the time I wasted in my younger years and for misusing my independence. I missed many opportunities to visit Vrindavan when I used to fly into New Delhi each month. Having lived in Mumbai for eleven years, I never once visited the large ISKCON temple there. I wonder how my life would have been if I had taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness sooner. But I also understand that I was not ready then and that I am ready now. The one positive thing was that as a flight attendant I served groups of devotees on our flights between India and Germany, often devotees traveling to and from the USA.

Kṛṣṇa's Protection

By the mercy of Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, in April 2009 I released my debut CD of Kṛṣṇa songs. I played all the instruments and sang the lead and the backup. Five of the tracks were written by fifteenth- and sixteenth-century saints who were exceptional devotees of Kṛṣṇa, so it is a tribute to their work.

I also feel that because my parents were followers of Lord Viṣṇu and because hearing Kṛṣṇa's glories was a part of my childhood, He protected me through all my bad decisions. He made sure I did not do anything drastic or lose my life even though I indulged in much sense gratification. For instance, I was on two flights where we had engine fires in mid-air. In one of them I was sitting facing the engine, which blew up right in front of me. Some of my colleagues were on an attempted hijacking that lasted eighteen hours. One of them was fatally shot. I was on the flight just prior to that and hence safe in my hotel room when I heard the news. I know there is no reason other than Kṛṣṇa's mercy for me to be where I am today.

Life is so fragile that it can end at any moment. The philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness will help you come to terms with that reality in such a way that the fear of leaving this body bothers you less and less. You come to understand that this world is not your real home. And you might as well remember that you will be forced to get out of your surroundings. So, make sure that your plans and activities are taking you in the right direction.

I am grateful to my parents for the spiritual foundation they gave me. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.40), a little effort on this path can deliver one from the greatest of fears. And it never goes to waste.

If my former comrades were to see me today they would probably pass out from shock. I would invite them to the Sunday feast and gladly serve them Kṛṣṇa *prasādam*—a great way to introduce them to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda, the founder and life of ISKCON! Thank you for helping me realize the futility of material life and for putting me on the path back home. While I have a long way to go, I find peace in the fact that I have started my walk back, one step at a time.

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YOU'RE INVITED!

The Sunday Feast

Most Hare Kṛṣṇa centers around the world put on a special festival every Sunday—for regulars as well as newcomers. Come by and get a taste of the world's oldest cultural tradition. Call your nearest center to find out the schedule for the Sunday Feast.

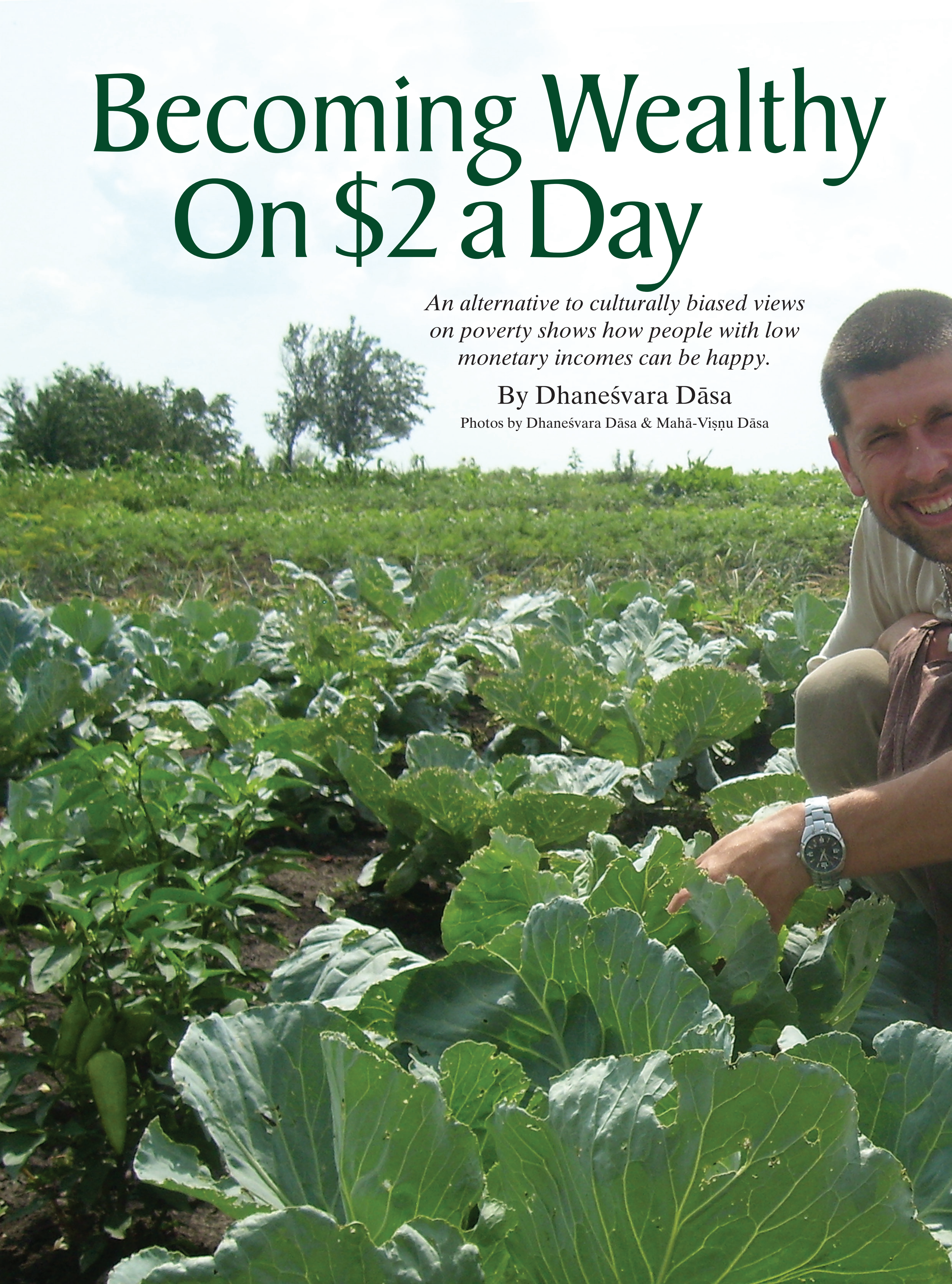
(See "Centers," pages 56–58, or visit directory.krishna.com.)

Becoming Wealthy On $2 a Day

An alternative to culturally biased views on poverty shows how people with low monetary incomes can be happy.

By Dhaneśvara Dāsa

Photos by Dhaneśvara Dāsa & Mahā-Viṣṇu Dāsa



PEOPLE NATURALLY see everything in terms of the world they are accustomed to. This cultural bias manifests in many ways, such as when the people of so-called prosperous countries set out to measure and fix poverty. Thinking that monetary income determines poverty, they project their conception on the rest of the world. They look at the world in terms of income and find that more than half of humanity is poor. Good souls that they are, they want to fix the problem.

Mahā-Viṣṇu Dāsa (below) chants among the vegetables at Gitagrad, a developing eco-spiritual community in Ukraine. His house (right), built during the Soviet era, is ready for extensive repairs.

But is the experience of a poor person in a poor country the same as that of a poor person in a rich country? No. As a general observation I'd say that most people in "poor" countries are relatively comfortable while the poor in "rich" countries are not.

I have met Indian villagers who would be classified as poor under United Nations guidelines (making less than $1.25 a day), and I can say from direct experience that these people do not think of themselves as poor or feel the effects of poverty as a person in America would at the same level of income. The same is true of the "poor" people I know in Eastern Europe.

What makes the difference? In a word, culture, which includes values and expectations. A house in an Indian or Ukrainian village is vastly different from one in urban or suburban America or Europe, but people live there just as happily as wealthier people living in luxury houses. The same is true for their daily needs. Villagers in India and Ukraine produce a good deal of their own food. They also have fewer clothing requirements than their Western counterparts, and fewer financial demands for things such as cars, insurance, or frivolous consumer goods—because these things are not a necessary part of their culture. Nonetheless the UN wants to change their culture, and that of many other people around the world, in order to raise them

The author (left) lives in this house (far left), which like the other houses at Gita-grad was a gift from devotees. Its one stove (bottom left) heats the house and cooks the food. Below, the author and Sakhi Vrinda (age 4) gather fallen ripe apricots to make jam.

above "poverty" by making sure they have more than $2 a day. That seems like a laudable goal, but perhaps we might pause to consider just what having more money is likely to do.

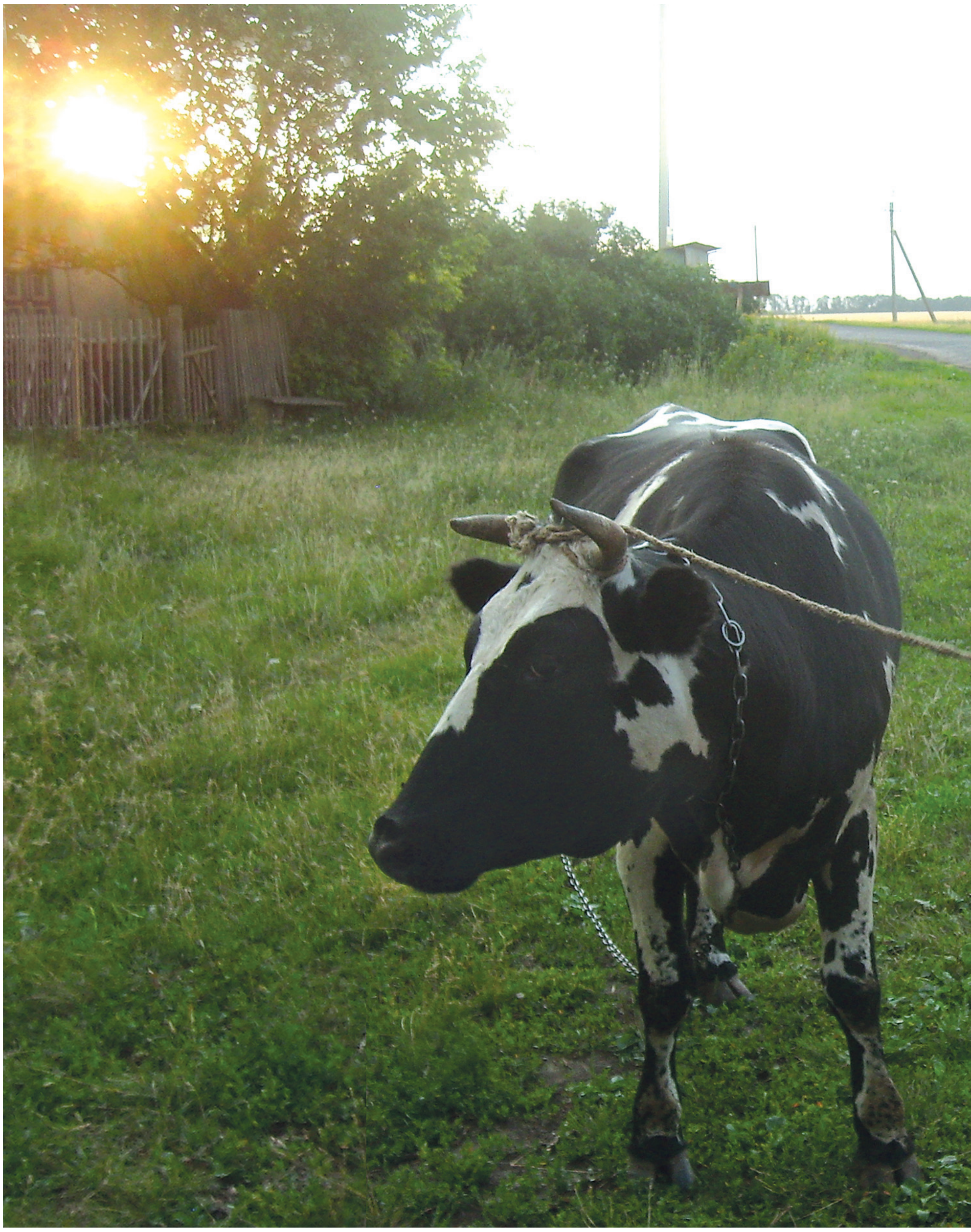
We have an example from recent history. Anthropologist Helena Norberg-Hodge was the first foreigner allowed to make her home in Ladakh, Kashmir. Beginning in the 1970s, she had the privilege of living there six months a year for three decades and came to know, and document, life in the traditional villages before the intrusion of Western culture. The Ladakhis lived in an agrarian subsistence economy. Though not an easy life by Western standards, with evident joy they met their basic physical, social, spiritual, and creative needs within the security of a caring, sharing community. Their happiness did not depend on income or possessions; it was simply experienced as a matter of daily living. Being mutually dependent, the villagers maintained a deep-rooted respect for one another's fundamental needs. And an acceptance of the natural limitations of the environment kept them free from misplacing values of worth.

At the time when this was observed, the Ladakhis might well have been considered poor by international standards because their income was minimal and most of their needs were met as a product of their own hands. Nonetheless, they were a satisfied and joyful people. But something changed that. Norberg-Hodge explains how it was the tourists who brought poverty to Ladakh:

> A Western tourist can spend more money in a day than what a Ladakhi family might in one year. Seeing this, Ladakhis suddenly feel poor. The new comparison creates a gap that never existed before because in traditional Ladakh, people didn't need money in order to lead rich and fulfilling lives. Ladakhi society was based on mutual aid and cooperation; no one needed money for labor, food, clothing, or shelter . . . In the traditional economy, Ladakhis knew that they had to depend on other people, and that others in turn depend on them. In the new economic system, local interdependence disintegrates along with traditional levels of tolerance. In place of cooperative systems meeting needs, competition and scarcity become determinants

> for survival. Perhaps the most tragic of all the changes I have observed in Ladakh is the vicious circle in which individual insecurity contributes to a weakening of family and community ties, which in turn further shakes individual self-esteem. Consumerism plays a central role in this whole process, since emotional insecurity generates hunger for material status symbols. The need for recognition and acceptance fuels the drive to acquire possessions that will presumably make you somebody. . . . It is heartbreaking to see people buying things to be admired, respected and ultimately loved, when in fact the effect is almost always the opposite. . . . [They are] set apart, which furthers the need to be accepted.*

Ironically, it was money that brought poverty to Ladakh. Prior to Westerners' arriving with a lot of money to spend, Ladakhis didn't consider themselves poverty-stricken, although their income was probably less than $1.25 a day. Only by comparing themselves to these foreigners—what they possessed and how they lived—did the



Bhakta Sasha draws water from the farm's one well (above). At right, Ekanātha Bhakti Dāsa carries water into Gitagrad's typical Ukranian-style barn.

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* Helena Norberg-Hodge, "The Pressure to Modernize and Globalize," from *Case Against the Global Economy,* by David Korten, p. 41.

Ladakhis begin to see themselves in a different light, as being in poverty and needing what they didn't need before: money and whatever it buys. Sadly, they were purchasing alienation and isolation at the same time.

In other places around the world, our cultural bias makes us want to eliminate poverty in the sense that we know it. But like the Lakadhis' experience, will that simply create poverty where it didn't exist before? One of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the elimination of global poverty, includes these three targets:

1. To halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than $1/day.
2. To achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.
3. To halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

Although these seem worthwhile targets, they are culturally biased; by determining the approach, they limit the means of attainment. The manner in which the targets are stated presupposes a business-development model of production for a market economy and employment of the people they wish to help. Their efforts are in earnest, and last year, in a vague report, the UN Secretary General said that although "significant progress" had been made, urgent and increased efforts were needed to meet the goals by 2015. Hundreds of millions of dollars are being invested in accomplishing these goals. But if the cultural bias were lifted, these same goals could be accomplished with much less money.

An Alternative that Worked

In the past half-century, nearly every development model has failed to bring Sub-Saharan Africa to a level where it can compete in an international market and at the

Ekanātha Bhakti Dāsa leads Kartika home from the pasture (above). She's due to calve in March. At right, Bhakta Aleksi (right) and Ekanātha Bhakti work on the greenhouse. Except for the plastic, it was built from salvaged materials (including nails) and wood scavenged from the forest.

same time give people needed jobs. But the efforts of one young man have stood all of these international-development concepts on their head. A second-generation devotee of Kṛṣṇa, Alexander Petroff,* twenty-five years of age, went to the war-torn, economically struggling Democratic Republic of Congo with a proposition for the government. He wanted to build a self-sufficient, environmentally sustainable village. The government agreed to his proposal and gave him forty hectares of land on which his organization, Working Villages International (WVI), created a development model called Village Self Reliance. Village Self Reliance is founded on the two ideas of swadeshi and sustainable agriculture. The Gandhian principle swadeshi refers to local production for local consumption—people producing for their own needs. According to the principle of swadeshi, whatever is made or produced in the village must be used first and foremost by the members of the village. Any excess can then be sold. With this approach, at the very least people have jobs and are fed. Sustainable agriculture is accomplished by using organic methods without external inputs, and using bullocks for plowing instead of fuel-thirsty tractors.

Starting with $70,000 from private donations, within two years WVI employed 400 workers supporting 350 families and producing 50,000 lbs. of rice per month, becoming the second-largest rice producer in the province. They also grew tons of vegetables. Instead of solving problems at the symptom level, WVI addressed the root causes of hunger, unemployment, and violence using a development model that can be adjusted to almost any region in the world. So in two years, not fifteen, one young man working with local people on a very modest budget accomplished not only the economic targets of the MDG, but many of the other targets as well.

Instead of jumping through a lot of hoops to adjust the income, why not simply adjust the culture by removing the external demands? This is easier because in many parts of the world a simple culture already exists. We have an uphill battle, however, if we want to change the culture by luring people into being consumers, having jobs, commuting to work each day, and changing their lifestyle to one of artificial dependence on others. In fact, by choosing the latter approach it is likely that although external economic targets may be realized, the people will be less happy and less secure, just as the Ladakhis were after the arrival of Western culture.

Following Prabhupāda's Model

Changing the culture to one of simplicity is the easiest way to achieve security and happiness. That is what

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* Alexander is the son of Noma Petroff, aka Hare Kṛṣṇa Dāsī, whose *Back to Godhead* column "The Land, the Cows, and Kṛṣṇa" ran from 1991 to 1999.

The summer kitchen (left) is used during the summer to keep the main house from getting too hot. Bhadravardhana Dāsa (below left) prepares curd for the temple and devotees in the city of Kharkov.

ISKCON's founder-*ācārya,* Śrīla Prabhupāda, encouraged his followers to do. He called it simple living and high thinking—live simply in order to sufficiently care for the needs of the body, and reap the benefits of doing so, including saving time to be used in activities of self-realization. Devotees of Kṛṣṇa all around the world have experienced the satisfaction that comes from devotional service to the Supreme Lord. If our time is properly used in worship of the Lord, then our simple living can also be fulfilling and satisfying.

"But," we may protest, "we can't all go backward to a simple village life. It's not possible!"

Not everyone will, of course, but certainly many can, especially those who never left, and there are a lot of them. And why not, if they can become secure and fulfilled? Having lived in villages in both India and Ukraine, I have found that it's not so difficult, and there are many enjoyable aspects of village life that are impossible to achieve in cities.

Right now I live in a simple three-room house in a village near Novo Vodolaga, Ukraine, about an hour's drive outside the city of Kharkov. This is the site of our developing eco-spiritual community, Gitagrad. The houses in this village, built some fifty years ago during Soviet times, are ready-made for simple living. One central wood stove is used for both cooking and heating. There is no running water in the house, meaning no bathroom, and the toilet is outside. We chop wood and carry water—the epitome of simple life throughout the world.

Why am I, an American formerly accustomed to modern amenities, living in these "primitive" conditions? Because I want to follow the instructions of my spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who wanted his followers to live simply, saving time for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and to learn first-hand the challenges and advantages of doing so. Having lived in Ukrainian villages for about a year, I can say that after accepting and adjusting to the simple mode of living, I do not find it taxing or onerous compared to a more modern standard. One of the reasons for living in a village is to become free from the modes of passion (*rajo-guṇa*) and ignorance (*tamo-guṇa*) that disturb the mind, distracting it from self-realization. If I have learned anything from my experience in the village, it is that it is almost entirely free of *rajo-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa.* Village life is self-regulating based on the demands of agriculture and the cows. They have their own time to which we must adjust, instead of attempting to adjust external circumstances to us, as we generally do in artificial city life.

Our effort here is to live a simple life of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, providing for ourselves by the natural economy what is typically purchased. Nature has its own economy, one that is strong and resilient. The cow does not charge for her milk, or go on strike. Mother Earth does not ask anything in exchange for her gifts. Both give freely, out of love, and all they ask in exchange is simple reciprocation and care. If we take care of them and treat them properly, they will continue to give their gifts despite what goes on in man's world.

This is what I have called Spiritual Economics, as explained in my book of the same title. Spiritual Economics describes the gift economy that the Lord has arranged—an economy of loving reciprocation that does not require money, that artificial creation of modern man. Indeed, we are striving to increase our spiritual economy more and more, and when we can come to the point of living completely according to Spiritual Economics, we will have achieved our goals. Ironically, when we arrive there we will have achieved what the UN considers a state of poverty, living on less than $2 a day. But we think that instead of that being a social tragedy, it will be a wonderful success.

Like poverty, the concept of wealth is a cultural consideration. Not all wealth is measured by money. Wealth is actually better measured by personal happiness and fulfillment. We think that the internal, non-tangible experiences of happiness and fulfillment are more worthy goals to attain than an external income of $2 a day, or even $500 a day. When we can live a simple, natural life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we will then have become very wealthy.

Dhaneśvara Dāsa received an M.S. degree in engineering from the University of Florida in 1973 and joined ISKCON in Gainesville the same year. He has been living and teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Eastern Europe for the past five years. His book Lessons in Spiritual Economics from the *Bhagavad-gita:* Part 1, Understanding and Solving the Economic Problem *is available from his website (www.spiritual-econ.com). You can keep up with his adventures in simple living by subscribing to his blog: http://gitagrad.blogspot.com.*

CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Māyāpur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. For the exact dates for your area, go to ***www.krishnadays.com.***

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

October 24–November 21

(*Month of Dāmodara*)

NOVEMBER

2—Ramā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

6—Diwali, the festival of illuminating Kṛṣṇa's temples with lamps. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

7—Govardhana Pūjā, the festival commemorating the worship of Govardhana Hill by the residents of Vṛndāvana and Kṛṣṇa's lifting the hill. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

9—Disappearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Devotees observe this day with personal remembrances of Śrīla Prabhupāda, readings from his biography, and fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

14—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a great follower of the six Gosvāmīs.

17—Utthānā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans. Disappearance of Śrīla Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī, spiritual master of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Prabhupāda's spiritual master. Fasting till noon.

21—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Rāsa-yātrā. Last day of Dāmodara-vrata and Cāturmāsya.

November 22–December 21

(*Month of Keśava*)

DECEMBER

2—Utpannā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

17—Mokṣadā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans. Also, the anniversary of the day on which Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā.*

December 22–January 19

(*Month of Nārāyaṇa*)

25—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

31—Saphalā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

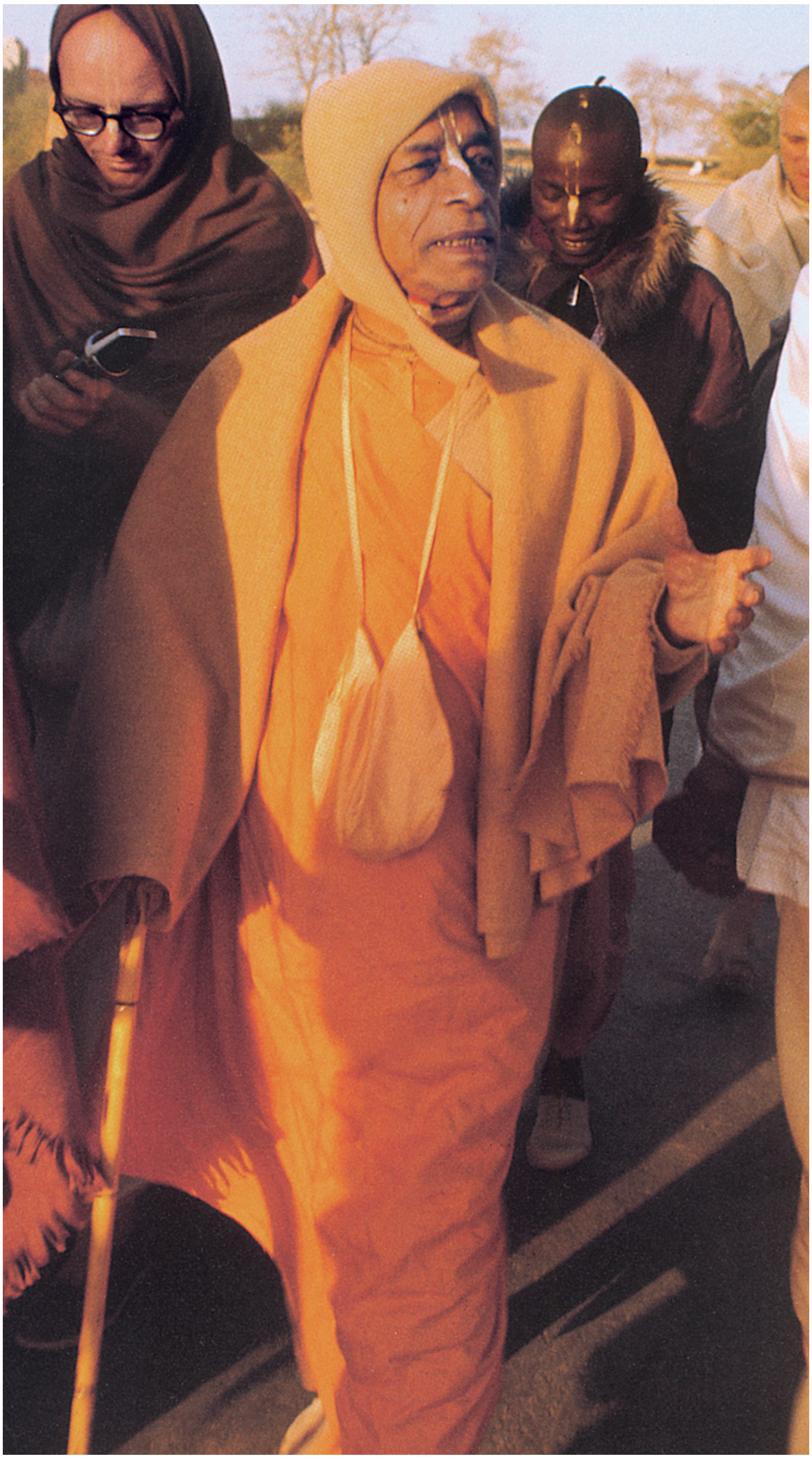
JANUARY

5—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs.

7—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

16—Putradā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

Expansions of Illusion



The following conversation between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place in June 1974 during an early-morning walk in Paris.

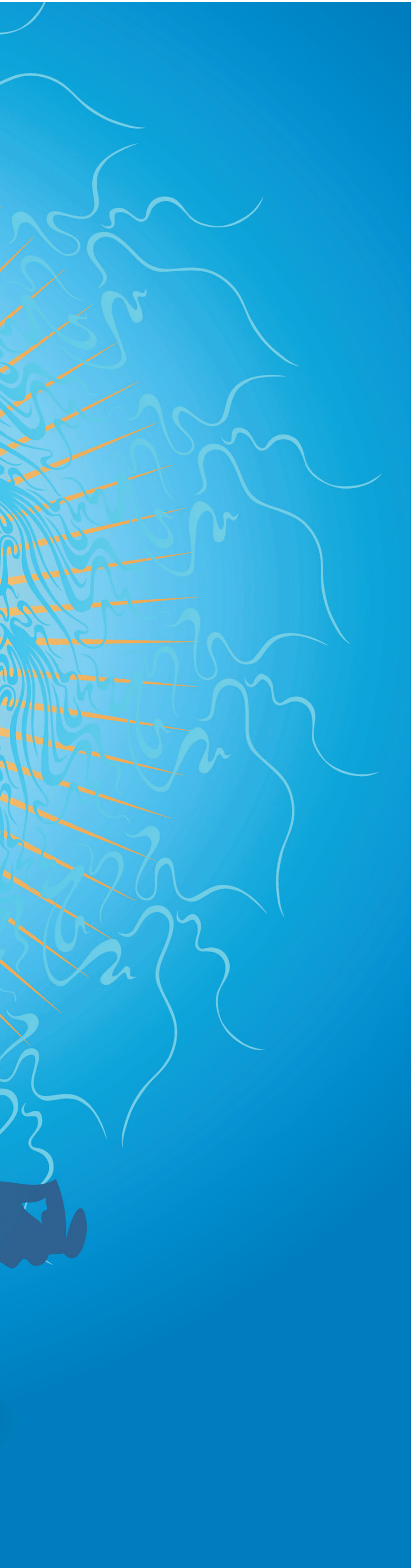
Śrīla Prabhupāda: What do you understand the word *māyā* to mean?
Disciple: Placing value on something without seeing its relation to Kṛṣṇa.
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. *Māyā* is explained very nicely in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [2.9.34]:

ṛte 'rthaṁ yat pratīyeta
na pratīyeta cātmani
tad vidyād ātmano māyāṁ
yathābhāso yathā tamaḥ

Seeing something to be disconnected from Kṛṣṇa is *māyā,* or illusion, because we are forgetting the original reality while taking the reflection to be very important. For example, suppose the sun is reflected in the water and then shines on the wall. If we take the light on the wall to be very important and forget the sun, the original reality, that is *māyā.*

[Śrīla Prabhupāda points to some nearby buildings.] These buildings were constructed without any thought of Kṛṣṇa, but people regarded them with great enthusiasm. Now all that remains are relics. So, the energy expended for manufacturing these buildings is *māyā,* and the enthusiasm people now have for visiting these relics—that is also *māyā.* All these things are expansions of *māyā,* illusion.
Disciple: Parisians might complain that you don't appreciate the architectural skill involved?
Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, we appreciate very much the intelligence of the

(*please turn to page 49*)



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Aṣṭāṅga-yoga, Kuṇḍalinī, And Bhakti

A close look at the steps in the traditional yoga system shows why it's unsuitable for the modern age.

By Jahnudvīpa Dāsa

THE PATH OF the classical yoga system described in the Vedic tradition is long and severe. Conceived by the ancient sage Patañjalī, that system is called *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, or the eightfold yoga system. It is a scientific, psychic method to gradually raise the consciousness to higher levels of awareness, culminating in *samādhi.* At that stage the self, realizing its own true nature, leaves its mortal shell and enters the liberated state. The eight progressive steps of the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system are *yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna,* and *samādhi.* I will briefly describe each step and then contrast *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* with *bhakti-yoga.*

Yama and Niyama

The first two principles, *yama* and *niyama,* are the do's and the don'ts, and they are applicable not only in yoga but in all aspects of life, for regardless of whether one aims at success in material or spiritual life, the key word is renunciation. We can't fulfill our wishes or reach life's goal without being to some degree renounced. Our practical lives confirm this. As a child I had a friend who would save his pocket money. Instead of spending it all on sweets and cinema trips, as the rest of us would invariably do, he would hold back and eventually save enough to buy stereo equipment. I was most impressed by this. As far as I was concerned it was an almost unfathomable feat, because I could never save my money. I always spent everything I had at once.

Later in life this friend went on to become a successful doctor. In high school and college, while his friends were out partying and having fun, he would stay home to study and prepare for exams. I realized then that to obtain success in the long run, one has to renounce many short-term pleasures. To work towards a better position in adult life, one has to forego many of the immediate pleasures one is often pushed to pursue in youthful life. In other words, one has to be renounced. One has to be able to control one's senses. Without sense control there is no possibility of success in material or spiritual life.

To control the senses is the preliminary aim of any genuine yoga system, and in *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* this is accomplished in a diligent and systematic way. *Yama,* the first step, means avoiding things that hinder attainment of the goal. For example, one must give up things like illicit sex, TV, movies, intoxication, and certain foods, such as meat, fish, and eggs. These things pollute the consciousness, distract the attention away from the self, and place it on the bodily demands and other externals.

Niyama, the second step, refers to the beneficial activities—daily meditations, rituals, exercise—one has to perform to reach the ultimate goal of yoga, union with the Supreme.

To control the senses is the preliminary aim of any genuine yoga system, and in *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* this is accomplished in a systematic way.

One crucial thing a yogi must avoid at all costs in *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* is sex. It is not possible to advance in this system unless one practices complete abstinence. In ordinary mundane life pleasures are mostly pursued outside of ourselves. We search for happiness in the body or mind by connecting the senses with objects or bodies outside ourselves, or we seek mental gratification in the form of name, fame, distinction, and power. The *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system, however, gives entrance to the deeper pleasures that lie within the soul. But before one can access this hidden pleasure, one has to restrain the senses from their engagement in the external world. In other words, in the yoga system the happiness sought after is not the happiness that arises from sense gratification. Sense gratification is not considered genuine happiness, because it invariably leads to suffering.

ye hi samsparśa-ja bhogā
duḥkha-yonaya eva te
ādy-antavantaḥ kaunteya
na teṣu ramate budhaḥ

"An intelligent person does not take part in the sources of misery, which are due to contact with the material senses. O son of Kuntī, such pleasures have a beginning and an end, and so the wise man does not delight in them." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 5.22)

Āsana

This brings us to the third step, *āsana,* known to most westerners as hatha-yoga. This discipline prepares the body to stay in different postures for long periods. The side effects include a healthy, slim body, but the real purpose is to gradually train the body to stay in the same position for hours or days and eventually even months and years. Until one can sit in the lotus position for hours and days without shifting and being uncomfortable, one cannot, for example, successfully raise the *kuṇḍalinī* (more on that later).

Prāṅāyāma

After years and years of practice, the yogi who has trained the body to master the *āsanas,* or the hatha-yoga system, will begin to work on breathing in the next step, *prāṇāyāma.* The aim of *prāṇāyāma* is, simply speaking, to gradually lower the breathing cycle. The Vedic tradition teaches that the lifespan of all living entities is predetermined by their number of breaths. By lowering the breathing cycle, accomplished yogis can prolong their lives by years—or even decades or centuries. This is necessary because becoming adept in the different disciplines of the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system takes a long time.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* relates the history of a prince named Dhruva Mahārāja who went to the forest and took to this practice in order to meet Lord Viṣṇu. He practiced yoga so determinedly that he was eventually eating only leaves. He stood on one leg and practiced *prāṇāyāma,* gradually lowering his breathing cycle to the point of inhaling and exhaling only once in six months.

The true aim of *prāṇāyāma,* however, is more than just prolonging one's life. The real aim is to be able to sit in trance and meditate, first on the *prāṇa* (life airs) and *cakras* (energy centers), then on the inner self, and finally on the Supersoul within the heart. By gradually extending the breathing cycle, one can subdue the actions of the body and mind. When the mind becomes still, one can turn it from being engaged in the external world to being focused within. We all know the expression "Take a deep breath" to calm the mind. It works.

Pratyāhāra

The yogi who has mastered breathing (by, as the *Gītā* says, "offering the outgoing breath into the incoming") is ready to proceed to the next step. Called *pratyāhāra,* this is the stage where the senses are withdrawn from all external engagements. The self shifts awareness from the physical world to the inner world of the mind. The senses, which are absorbed in the objects and relationships of the physical world, are forced to retract and focus on the inner, psychic world. The world of the mind is subtle. Some people call it the astral plane. In *pratyāhāra* the consciousness goes from being absorbed in the external, physical plane to being absorbed in the internal, psychic plane. Transcendental to or above both these planes is the plane of pure consciousness, toward which the yogi strives.

Dhāraṇa

Through further hard practice, yogis able to maintain the focus of their consciousness progress to the stage of *dhāraṇa,* full fixation on the inner, subtle world of the mind. All sensual engagements have ceased, and the yogi perceives only the mind. There is no perception of sound, touch, form, taste, or smell, and thus no awareness of the external world. Only when one reaches the *dhāraṇa* state does *dhyāna,* meditation, arise.

Yamarāja Dāsa

HARE KṚṢṆA, HARE KṚṢṆA
KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA, HARE HARE
HARE RĀMA, HARE RĀMA
RĀMA RĀMA, HARE HARE

PRONUNCIATION: ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma (rhymes with "drama")
To hear Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting,
click on the mantra on the Krishna.com home page.

Dhyāna

In the modern world people use the word *meditation* cheaply to describe almost any kind of concentration. Some people even think that to just sit down, relax, and let the mind wander is meditation, or if they are a little more advanced they think that focusing on a flame or a ring on the wall for five minutes is meditation. We should note, however, that in the classical yoga system described in the Vedic tradition meditation does not take place before one can completely cease all external sensual engagements and focus the consciousness on the self. Only then can one progress to the state of *dhyāna,* or meditation.

Now the yogi begins to meditate—and discovers the soul, the real observer within. The soul finally observes its own self as an illuminating particle of consciousness within the heart. Understanding that this is the real self, the mature yogi also sees the Supersoul form of Kṛṣṇa, who lives in the heart of all living entities. Sometimes pride or insufficient knowledge causes the yogi to mistake the Supersoul for his own self and conclude that he himself is the Supreme. The yogi who makes that mistake will not reach Vaikuṇṭha, the spiritual planets where devotees eternally serve the Supreme Lord, but will go no further than impersonal Brahman, the Lord's spiritual rays. Thus the yogi who discovers God in the heart can either maintain a humble position and surrender to Him, or reach any goal up to liberation from the material world. This is the final test for the yogi: to attain a higher material position, merge with Brahman, or become God's servant. Whatever the yogi chooses at that point will be attained.

Samādhi

The yogi has now reached the state called *samādhi,* the final goal of meditation, and is ready to leave the body through the process sometimes called raising the *kuṇḍalinī.*

The yogi pushes the soul out through the top of the skull and goes wherever the consciousness is fixed at that moment. Histories of yogis described in Vedic literature show that the energy thus released is so immense that the body is sometimes consumed by fire. We learn from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that when King Dhṛtarāṣṭra went to the forest to leave his body in this way, he started a forest fire. It was into this fire that his wife, Gāṇḍhārī, and Queen Kuntī, the mother of the Pāṇḍavas, entered together to gain release from their mortal bodies.

Raising the *kuṇḍalinī*: the yogi pushes the soul out through the top of the skull and goes wherever the consciousness is fixed at that moment.

Only when one has reached the state of *samādhi* can one begin to raise the *kuṇḍalinī*. The yogi pushes the life airs (*prāṇa*) from the *mūla-cakra,* the lowest *cakra,* gradually up through the other *cakras* of the body until it reaches the heart *cakra*. From its seat there, the soul rises to the highest *cakra,* at the top of the head. Pushing the *prāṇa* up through the different *cakras* constitutes a *kuṇḍalinī* rising. As the *kuṇḍalinī* is rising, the pressure inside the body becomes so great that the yogi must use the mastered *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma* techniques to block all the holes in body lest the soul should escape through any one of them. The Vedic literature calls the body "the city of nine gates" (anus, genitals, mouth, two nostrils, two ear holes, and two eyes).

This type of yoga is extremely difficult to practice in the modern age. The yogis of yore would go to the forest to practice *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* and leave their bodies.

The Yoga of Chanting

For spiritual perfection in the current age, Kali-yuga, the Vedic literature doesn't recommend *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, a severe practice. Instead, it recommends the simple, sublime method of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra,* which can be practiced anywhere, even in an apartment downtown. In fact, a person can benefit more from chanting the holy names of the Lord while sitting in a city apartment than from sitting in the Himalayas practicing *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* for 100,000 years, the general lifespan of people in Satya-yuga, when this practice was the norm.

Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that one who practices *bhakti-yoga* can reap any result obtained from practicing any other yoga. And the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12.3.52) states:

kṛte yad dhyāyato viṣṇum
tretāyāṁ yajato makhaiḥ
dvāpare paricaryāyāṁ
kalau tad dhari-kīrtanāt

"Whatever result was obtained in Satya-yuga by meditating on Viṣṇu, in Tretā-yuga by performing sacrifices, and in Dvāpara-yuga by serving the Lord's lotus feet can be obtained in Kali-yuga simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra.*"

People in the present age are simply too disturbed to sit down and practice the ancient yoga system. Maybe a few yogis can still go into the Himalayas, sit in seclusion in a mountain cave, and practice this system, but for the people in general it is not possible. Nor are there qualified teachers to guide a serious student in this yoga process.

The fundamental difference between the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system and the *bhakti-yoga* system is that in the first, yogis try to elevate themselves by their own mental and intellectual endeavors. In *bhakti-yoga* we ask Kṛṣṇa to pick us up and carry us back to Him. Śrīla Prabhupāda likened the difference between the two methods to the difference in how a kitten and a baby monkey are carried by their respective mothers. The baby monkey holds on to its mother by its own strength. When the mother monkey jumps around from tree to tree, her baby can lose its grip and fall to the ground. The kitten, on the other hand, is carried to safety by its mother, depending solely on the mother's strength. In the same way, the *bhakti-yogi,* aware of being powerless without Kṛṣṇa, depends solely on Him. *Aṣṭāṅga* yogis struggle to cross the ocean of material suffering by their own powers and have no guarantee of success. But someone who surrenders to Kṛṣṇa can very easily cross over nescience.

daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī
mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante
māyām etāṁ taranti te

"This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.14)

Bhakti-yoga is infinitely easier and more secure than manipulating the *prāṇa* and *cakras* to push the soul through the top of the head at the final moment. In *bhakti-yoga,* Kṛṣṇa helps His devotee reach the final goal.

Jahnudvīpa Dāsa joined ISKCON in Copenhagen in 1982. His services have included book distribution, Radio Krishna, and translating and editing for the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. For the last nine years, he and his wife, Braja Sevakī Dāsī, have lived in Mayapur, where he designs ISKCON books and magazines.

EXPANSIONS OF ILLUSION

(*continued from page 43*)

architect, but if you forget Kṛṣṇa while constructing a big building, then it is *māyā.* Otherwise, it is reality. If the people of Paris would have installed the deity of Kṛṣṇa in these buildings, how nice that would have been! People chanting, dancing, and taking *prasādam* every day. Then there would have been no *māyā.* These big buildings should have been places for people to worship Kṛṣṇa, but instead they're worshiping bones, some dead bones.

Disciple: People must be taught that everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is a fact that everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa. Why do they not understand?

Disciple: When we say, "Everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa," they say, "We don't know Kṛṣṇa."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is nonsense. You may not know that everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa, but you know that it belongs to somebody besides you. He may be called Kṛṣṇa or something else—that doesn't matter—but nothing belongs to you. How can you deny it? Suppose I come here to Paris and stay for one week. Does that mean Paris is mine? Similarly, you come from the womb of your mother and stay in the world for, say, eighty years. Does that mean the world belongs to you?

So why are you claiming, "This is France," "This is Europe," "This is America," "This is my country"? Before your birth the land was here, and when you go it will remain here. So how can you claim that it is yours? What is the answer?

Disciple: The land belongs to the person who created it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: And who created it?

Disciple: Nature.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What is that nature?

Disciple: The life force working behind?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Nature is Kṛṣṇa's energy (*mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram* [*Bhagavad-gītā* 9.10]). So everything is created by Kṛṣṇa, and everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, the scriptures teach that we are actually tiny spirit souls—one ten-thousandth the tip of a hair—and yet we become so puffed up that we think, "I am God" or "I am the controller of the material nature." How is this illusion possible?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Because you are in the bodily concept of life. You do not know that you are a tiny spirit soul, a particle of consciousness. You are thinking, "I am this big fatty body," just as a dog is thinking, "I am a strong bulldog." It is the same illusion.

Disciple: But the materialist will insist that he is acting independently of God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How is he independent of God? Napoleon wanted to finish his task, to conquer Europe, but he was kicked out of his position. Such a strong person, but he was not allowed to finish the task. How could he think that he was independent of God? That is foolishness. He was subject to being kicked out of his body at any moment, yet he was still thinking, "I am independent." Where was his independence? He was simply falsely puffed up. And now, after being kicked out, if he has taken the body of a cat or dog, what was the benefit of all his previous activities? In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [3.27] Kṛṣṇa says, *prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ:* "Everything is going on under the stringent laws of nature." But we are such fools that we think we are independent.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says that whatever we think of when we die will determine our next birth. So is it true that a materialist's accumulated mental impressions force him to take another body?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Disciple: And a devotee doesn't accumulate any mental impressions?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. He has mental impressions; his mental impressions are of Kṛṣṇa. He's always thinking of Kṛṣṇa. For example, we may have some propensity to create a beautiful place like this park. We have creative energies. Therefore it is advised, *nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe:* create for Kṛṣṇa. In India people have also created big fortlike buildings, but they are temples for worshiping Kṛṣṇa. If the people who built this park had spent their energy for creating it in relationship to Kṛṣṇa, they would have been purified. But because this park is simply meant for sense gratification, we know that the people who built it were under the laws of nature. So they increased their material contamination. You may create so many things, but if you become contaminated by the modes of material nature and have to accept the body of a cat or dog, then what is your benefit?

DO YOU LIVE FAR FROM A TEMPLE?

There may be Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees near you who hold regular get-togethers or want to start them. We don't have room for these gatherings on the Centers list we print in the magazine, but our online list includes many of them. To find out if there's a regular Kṛṣṇa conscious program near you, or to list your own, log on to Krishna.com and click on "Address list" under QUICK LINKS on the right side of the home page.

Seeking Treasu

Sydney

A happy group discovers lasting wealth on a four-hour cruise.

By Gaura Hari Dāsa and Śrī Prahlāda Dāsa

THE SUN'S RAYS danced on the glistening blue waters of Australia's famous Sydney Harbour. The Vagabond Spirit, a sturdy 108-foot catamaran, was docked under the Harbour Bridge, captain and crew ready to depart. A heavy-set man with a black pirate hat and an eye patch greeted them with a wry smile.

"We will discover treasure aplenty on this voyage, shipmates," he said, "but keep the rum locked away!"

Treasure hunting has historically been a popular activity on the Sydney Harbour. In the eighteenth century, European explorers were drawn to its waters seeking to establish it as a gateway to their new colony and all the riches that the Australian subcontinent held in store. The colony's first governor, Arthur Phillip, described it in his first dispatch to England as "the finest harbour in the world."

Centuries later, millions of treasure seekers are drawn to Sydney Harbour each year, with tourism contributing to a large sector of Australia's economy. For the year ending in June 2009, Australia received five and a half million international visitors.

Both on foot and in hired boats, the treasure hunters seek to experience first hand Sydney Harbour's natural beauty, with its pristine sandy beaches, botanical gardens, tributaries, and islands teaming with rare specimens of wildlife.

Magnificent manmade structures housing some of Australia's most valued national treasures adorn the water's edge. Among these, the sail-shaped Sydney Opera House, designed to represent the sails of the first fleet of European

re on Harbour

The Sydney Opera House (below) provides the backdrop for Hare Kṛṣṇa chanters aboard the Vagabond Spirit (left).

VAGABOND SPIRIT

explorers, commands the greatest interest. Events such as the New Year's Eve fireworks and the Sydney-to-Hobart Yacht Race are also well-known international crowd drawers.

Popular with private parties and corporate employees are treasure hunts conducted for pleasure or team-building exercises. Dressed as pirates, they split into teams and follow clues left around Sydney Harbour, trying to be the first team to reach the treasures of Australian wine, chocolate, or gift vouchers.

A Unique Group Of Treasure Hunters

The Vagabond Spirit was on a different journey. The organizer or chief mate, Vara-nayaka Dāsa, is also the president of the Sydney ISKCON temple. Playfully wearing a black pirate hat, he smiled as he addressed more than two hundred *kīrtana* enthusiasts packed into the main hull.

"Welcome, shipmates, to Sydney's Kīrtana Cruise 2010!" he declared.

The Sydney Harbour Kīrtana Cruise attracts Kṛṣṇa devotees and yoga practitioners from across Australia eagerly seeking the trea-

Indradyumna Swami leads kīrtana *in the main hull of the ship (above), with co-authors Gaura Hari Dāsa (drummer) and Śrī Prahlāda Dāsa (playing* karatālas*). Right: one of the more than two hundred chanters onboard. Far right: preparing* prasādam *in the galley.*

sure of singing the holy name. As the boat gently rocked from side to side, the "shipmates" swayed, some in yoga posture with closed eyes and beatific smiles, others dancing, clapping, or playing instruments: *karatālas, mṛdaṅga,* and harmonium. All were singing the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra in response to the calls of lead singer Indradyumna Mahārāja. A *sannyāsī* and modern-day spiritual vagabond himself, for over thirty years he has been traveling to share *kīrtana* throughout the world.

After forty-five minutes of *kīrtana,* the devotees listened with excitement as Indradyumna Mahārāja spoke of the adventures of Prabhupāda and his disciples in spreading *kīrtana* culture around the world in the 1960s and 1970s. It was Śrīla Prabhupāda who introduced *kīrtana* to the West, leading a group of singers and dancers under a tree in New York's Tompkins Square Park through the summer of 1966. Later he sent disciples to Europe, where they enlisted the support of Beatles John Lennon and George Harrison, who were responsible for having Hare Kṛṣṇa *kīrtana* released as a single that topped music charts around the world.

Today *kīrtana* is a worldwide phenomenon, becoming increasingly popular at yoga studios and even some churches around the world. On January 19, 2009, the day before President Obama's inauguration, four hundred enthusiasts assembled at Washington, D.C.'s, Church of the Holy City, within view of the White House. There they sought to usher in a new era of hope and change with a *kīrtana* festival called "Chanting4change."

Awakening Our Original Consciousness

According to ancient Vaiṣṇava texts, *kīrtana* awakens consciousness of our original nature as spiritual beings. The body is an outer covering for the soul within, the real person. As spiritual entities, we are eternal, sentient, and joyful. Misidentification with the body as the self produces fluctuating moods of happiness and distress, as well as the experience of death.

The Vedic texts recommend *kīrtana* as the most effective means to penetrate the coverings of material identification, awaken the soul's blissful spiritual nature, and reconnect with the Supreme. Such reawakening ends the cycle of birth and death, returning the successful practitioner to the spiritual world, where the Supreme Lord is glorified with joyous singing and dancing. Thus *kīrtana* is an eternal spiritual principle.

About five hundred years ago, Lord Caitanya emphasized the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra,* "the greatest of mantra chants." It is not a prayer for material gain or spiritual emancipation, but a selfless prayer of divine love.

Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Ādi-līlā* 17.22) declares, "In this Age of Kali, the holy name of the Lord, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra,* is the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Simply by chanting the holy name, one associates with the Lord directly. Anyone who does this is certainly delivered [from material existence].”

Rūpa Gosvāmī, a disciple of Lord Caitanya, glorifies Him as the most munificent incarnation because He promoted *kīrtana* and broke major social trends to make it available to everyone, regardless of caste, color, or creed. Thus Lord Caitanya gave everyone the opportunity to become fully enlightened by this simple and blissful spiritual activity.

Carried Above the Waves

Aboard the Vagabond Spirit, participants of all ages, from all over Australia and beyond her waters, jubilantly dove into the *kīrtana* experience.

As the yacht glided across Sydney’s azure harbor and past its crowded beaches, one of the devotees, Kośala, remarked, “I got so into the *kīrtana* that I forgot I was even on a boat!”

When the Vagabond Spirit docked four hours later under the Harbour Bridge, the participants cheerfully disembarked onto dry land.

Vara-nayaka spoke of his purpose in organizing the cruise every year: “Not only does it increase the participants’ taste for chanting Kṛṣṇa’s name, but it also strengthens the *kīrtana* community, uniting us as one big spiritual family.”

Niti, who flew from Brisbane for the cruise, commented, “It was such a beautiful and fresh location for doing what we always do in our homes and temples.”

Asked if she had found her treasure, Jāmbavatī Dāsī, joining the cruise from New Zealand, exclaimed, “Of course! The *kīrtana* was amazing! That’s the real treasure, mate.”

In *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* (1.9) Sanātana Gosvāmī writes, “The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is the highest nectar. It is my very life and my only treasure.”

As the authorized process for attaining spiritual love, Kṛṣṇa *kīrtana* awakens in the heart feelings of spiritual happiness that cannot be compared to the earthly treasures that have been sought since

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Hands reach for the sky (right) as the kīrtana *peaks. Below, Indradyumna Swami discusses Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a relaxed setting.*

antiquity. The happiness comes not from external settings but from the association of like-minded souls who have come together to plunder the treasure chest of love. The holy name is unlimited and ever expanding, and so devotees for generations to come will sing *kīrtana* together on an inward spiritual journey that will take them far beyond the blue oceans of this world. ❁

Gaura Hari Dāsa was born in Ireland to devotee parents, Prahlāda Mahārāja Dāsa and Ānanda Maya Dāsī, and took initiation from His Holiness Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami at age sixteen. He has traveled worldwide as part of various festival tours promoting Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He now lives and works in London with his wife, Bāleśvarī Dāsī.

Śrī Prahlāda Dāsa has been practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness and singing kīrtana *since childhood. Currently living in Sydney, where he is completing a Ph.D., he regularly performs* kīrtana *at yoga schools and other venues in the Sydney area and frequently travels to perform* kīrtana *internationally.*

All photos except the top photo on page 50 are by Vara-nayaka Dāsa.

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Solapur, Maharashtra — Hare Krishna Land, 171/2 Uttar Kasabe, Akkalkot Rd., Bhaktivedanta Marg, near New Jakat Naka, Dist. Solapur, 413006/ Tel. 9371178393 or 9370651251/ shursendas@yahoo.co.in
Sri Rangam, TN — 103 Amma Mandapam Rd., Sri Rangam, Trichy 620 006/ Tel. (431) 2433945/ iskcon_srirangam@yahoo.com.in
Surat, Gujarat — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura, 395 005/ Tel. (261) 2765891 or 2765516/ surat@pamho.net
Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), Kerala — Hospital Rd., Thycaud, 695 014/ Tel. (471) 2328197/ jsdasa@yahoo.co.in
Tirunelveli, TN — 10B Tiruvananthapuram, Near Vannarapettai Circle, 627 002/ Tel. (462) 2501640
◆ **Tirupati, AP —** K.T. Rd., Vinayaka Nagar, 517 507/ Tel. (877) 2231760 or 2230009/ revati.raman.jps@pamho.net (Guesthouse: guesthouse.tirupati@pamho.net)
Udhampur, J&K — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Srila Prabhupada Marg, Srila Prabhupada Nagar 182 101/ Tel. (1992) 270298/ info@iskconudhampur.com
Ujjain, MP — 35–37 Hare Krishna Land, Bharatpuri, 456 010/ Tel. (734) 2535000 or 2531000, or 9300969016/ Fax: (734) 2536000/ iskcon.ujjain@pamho.net
Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat — Opp. B&B Polytechnic, Mota Bazaar, Ananda, 388 120/ Tel. (2692) 230796 or 233012/ iskcon.vvnagar@pamho.net
Varanasi, UP — ISKCON, B 27/80 Durgakund Rd., Near Durgakund Police Station, Varanasi 221 010/ Tel. (542) 246422 or 222617
Vellore, TN — Chennai Ext. Centre, 10–12, 10th East Cross Road, Gandhi Nagar, 632 006
Vijayawada, AP — Venkatapalem Karakatta Rd., Undavalli Village, Tadepalli Mandaal, Vijayawada, Dist. Guntur 522 501/ Tel. (8645) 272513/ mmdasiskconvijayawada@gmail.com
Visakhapatnam, AP — Hare Krishna Land, Sagaranagar-45 (City office and mail: Plot No. 52, Pandurangapuram, Beach Rd., Visakhapatnam 530 043)/ Tel. (891)2528376 or 6537625/ samba.jps@pamho.net (Guesthouse: guesthouse.vizag@pamho.net)
◆ **Vrindavan, UP —** Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Dist. Mathura, 281 124/ Tel. & Fax: (565) 2540728/ iskcon.vrindavan@pamho.net; (Guesthouse: Tel. (565) 2540022; ramamani@sancharnet.in)
Warangal, AP — Mulugu Rd., Ayappa Pidipally, 506 007/ Tel. (8712) 426182
Yamunanagar, Haryana — ISKCON Hare Krishna Dham, Hare Krishna Marg, Raghunathpuri, Yamunanagar 135001/ Tel. (1732) 321001 or (mobile) 09355330775/ vishu_bakshi05@yahoo.co.in

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Ahmedabad District, Gujarat (Hare Krishna Farm) — Katwada (contact ISKCON Ahmedabad)
Assam — Karnamadhu, Dist. Karimganj
Chamorshi, Maharashtra — 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadhachiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (218) 623473
Hyderabad, AP (New Naimisaranya Farm) — P.O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., Dist. R.R., 501 401/ Tel. (40) 65520070 or 9440057263/ naimisaranya@pamho.net

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Many temples have their own websites, which you can find at our online directory: http://directory.krishna.com. Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91). For information on international calling, go to www.howtocallabroad.com. ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining

Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir) — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (731) 572794
Mayapur, WB — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
Puri, Orissa — ISKCON, Bhaktivedanta Ashram, Sipasirubuli, 752 001/ Tel. (6752) 230494
Surat, Gujarat — Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd. Gangapur, P. O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (2622) 63546
Vrindavan, UP — Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Kolkata, WB — Govinda's, ISKCON House, 22 Gurusaday Rd., 700 019/ Tel. (33) 24756922 or 24749009
Surat, Gujarat — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura 395005/ Tel. (261) 2765891 or 2765516/ surat@pamho.net

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Brampton-Mississauga, Ontario — Unit 20, 1030 Kamato Dr., L4W 4B6/ Tel. (416) 840-6587 or (905) 826-1290/ iskconbrampton@gmail.com
Calgary, Alberta — 313 Fourth St. N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ Fax: (403) 547-0795/ vamanstones@shaw.ca
Edmonton, Alberta — 9353 35th Ave. NW, T6E 5R5/ Tel. (780) 439-9999/ harekrishna.edmonton@gmail.com
Montreal, Quebec — 1626 Pie IX Blvd., H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/ iskconmontreal@gmail.com
◆ **Ottawa, Ontario —** 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ Fax: (613) 565-2575/ iskconottawa@sympatico.ca
Regina, Saskatchewan — 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-0002 or -6461/ jagadishadas@yahoo.com
Toronto, Ontario — 243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ Fax: (416) 922-1021/ toronto@pamho.net
Vancouver, B.C. — 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728/ Fax: (604) 648-8715; Govinda's Bookstore & Cafe: (604) 433-7100 or (888) 433-8722/ akrura@krishna.com

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Ashcroft, B.C. — Saranagati Dhama, Venables Valley (mail: P. O. Box 99, V0K 1A0)/ Tel. (250) 457-7438/ Fax: (250) 453-9306/ iskconsaranagati@hotmail.com

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Berkeley, California — 2334 Stuart St., 94705/ Tel. (510) 649-8619/ Fax: (510) 665-9366
Boise, Idaho — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ boise_temple@yahoo.com
Boston, Massachusetts — 72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/ Fax: (617) 909-5181/ darukrishna@iskconboston.org
Chicago, Illinois — 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ Fax: (773) 973-0526/ chicagoiskcon@yahoo.com
Columbus, Ohio — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ Fax: (614) 294-0545
◆ **Dallas, Texas —** 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ Fax: (214) 823-7264/ txkrishnas@aol.com; restaurant: vegetariantaste@aol.com
◆ **Denver, Colorado —** 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052
Detroit, Michigan — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ gaurangi108@hotmail.com
Gainesville, Florida — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ Fax: (352) 379-2927/ kalakantha.acbsp@pamho.net
Hartford, Connecticut — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/ pyari@sbcglobal.net
◆ **Honolulu, Hawaii —** 51 Coelho Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-4913/ rama108@bigfoot.com
Houston, Texas — 1320 W. 34th St., 77018/ Tel. (713) 686-4482/ Fax: (713) 956-9968/ management@iskconhouston.org
Kansas City, Missouri — 5201 Paseo Blvd., 64110/ Tel. (816) 924-5619/ Fax: (816) 924-5640/ rvc@rvc.edu
Laguna Beach, California — 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (949) 494-7029/ info@lagunatemple.com
Las Vegas, Nevada — Govinda's Center of Vedic India, 7181 Dean Martin Dr., 89118/ Tel. (702) 434-8332/ info@govindascenter.com
◆ **Los Angeles, California —** 3764 Watseka Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ Fax: (310) 839-2715/ membership@harekrishnala.com
◆ **Miami, Florida —** 3220 Virginia St., 33133 (mail: 3109 Grand Ave., #491, Coconut Grove, FL 33133)/ Tel. (305) 442-7218/ devotionalservice@iskcon-miami.org
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◆ **New York, New York —** 305 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn, 11217/ Tel. (718) 855-6714/ Fax: (718) 875-6127/ ramabhadra@aol.com
New York, New York — 26 Second Ave., 10003/ Tel. (212) 253-6182/ krishnanyc@gmail.com
Orlando, Florida — 2651 Rouse Rd., 32817/ Tel. (407) 257-3865/ info@iskconorlando.com
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — 41 West Allens Ln., 19119/ Tel. (215) 247-4600/ Fax: (215) 247-8702/ iskconphilly@aol.com
◆ **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania —** 1408 South St., 19146/ Tel. (215) 985-9303/ savecows@aol.com
Phoenix, Arizona — 100 S. Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (480) 705-4900/ Fax: (480) 705-4901/ premadhatridd@live.com
Portland, Oregon — 3766 SE Division, 97202/ Tel. (503) 236-6734; info@iskconportland.com
◆ **St. Louis, Missouri —** 3926 Lindell Blvd., 63108/ Tel. (314) 535-8085 or 534-1708/ Fax: (314) 535-0672/ iskcon.stl@pamho.net
San Antonio, Texas — 6772 Oxford Trace, 78240/ Tel. (210) 401-6576/ aadasa@gmail.com
◆ **San Diego, California —** 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach, 92109/ Tel. (858) 483-2500 or 272-8263/ Fax: (858) 483-0941/ krishna.sandiego@gmail.com
San Jose, California — 951 S. Bascom Ave., 95128/ Tel. (408) 293-4959/ iskconsanjose@yahoo.com
Seattle, Washington — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish, 98075/ Tel. (425) 246-8436/ Fax: (425) 868-8928/ info@vedicculturalcenter.org
◆ **Spanish Fork, Utah —** Krishna Temple Project & KHQN Radio, 8628 S. State Rd., 84660/ Tel. (801) 798-3559/ Fax: (810) 798-9121/ carudas@earthlink.net
Tallahassee, Florida — 1323 Nylic St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 224-3803/ darudas@gmail.com
Towaco, New Jersey — 100 Jacksonville Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 109), 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/ madhupati.jas@pamho.net
◆ **Tucson, Arizona —** 711 E. Blacklidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ Fax: (520) 791-0906/ tucphx@cs.com
Washington, D.C. — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ Fax: (301) 299-5025/ ad@pamho.net

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◆ **Alachua, Florida (New Raman Reti) —** 17306 N.W. 112th Blvd., 32615 (mail: P.O. Box 819, 32616)/ Tel. (386) 462-2017/ Fax: (386) 462-2641/ alachuatemple@gmail.com
Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) — 31492 Anner Rd., 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ talavan@hughes.net
Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo (mail: HC-01, Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ Tel. (787) 367-3530 or (787) 737-1722/ manonatha@gmail.com
Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka) — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ bkgoswami@earthlink.net
◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban) —** R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ Fax: (304) 845-0023/ mail@newvrindaban.com
Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — 532 Murari Ln., 37359 (mail: P.O. Box 108, Lynchburg, TN 37352)/ Tel. (931) 227-6156/ Tel. & fax: (931) 759-6888/ murari_sevaka@yahoo.com
Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — 534 Gita Nagari Rd., 17082/ Tel. (717) 527-4101/ dhruva.bts@pamho.net
Sandy Ridge, North Carolina — Prabhupada Village, 1283 Prabhupada Rd., 27046/ Tel. (336) 793-7138/ tothn108@yahoo.com

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Hato Rey, Puerto Rico — Tamal Krishna's Veggie Garden, 131 Eleanor Roosevelt, 00918/ Tel. (787) 754-6959/ Fax: (787) 756-7769/ tkveggiegarden@aol.com
Seattle, Washington — My Sweet Lord, 5521 University Way, 98105/ Tel. (425) 643-4664

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

Belfast, Northern Ireland — Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Ln., BT17 OHE/ Tel. +44 (28) 9062 0530
Birmingham, England — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (121) 420 4999/ birmingham@iskcon.org.uk
Cardiff, Wales — The Soul Centre, 116 Cowbridge Rd., East Canton CF11 9DX/ Tel. +44 (29) 2039 0391/ the.soul.centre@pamho.net
Coventry, England — Kingfield Rd., Coventry (mail: 19 Gloucester St., Coventry CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (24) 7655 2822 or 5420/ haridas.kds@pamho.net
◆ **Dublin, Ireland —** 83 Middle Abbey St., Dublin 1/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ dublin@krishna.ie; Govinda's: info@govindas.ie
Leicester, England — 21 Thoresby St., North Evington, LE5 4GU/ Tel. +44 (116) 276 2587/ pradyumna.jas@pamho.net
Lesmahagow, Scotland — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (1555) 894790/ Fax: +44 (1555) 894526/ karunabhavan@aol.com
◆ **London, England (city) —** 10 Soho St., W1D 3DL/ Tel. +44 (20) 7437-3662; residential /pujaris, 7439-3606; shop, 7287-0269; Govinda's Restaurant, 7437-4928/ Fax: +44 (20) 7439-1127/ london@pamho.net
◆ **London, England (country) —** Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Ln., Watford, Herts, WD25 8EZ/ Tel. +44 (1923) 851000/ Fax: +44 (1923) 851006/ info@krishnatemple.com; (for accommodations:) bmguesthouse@krishna.com
London, England (south) — 42 Enmore Rd., South Norwood, SE25 5NG/ Tel. +44 7988857530/ krishnaprema89@hotmail.com
London, England (Kings Cross) — 102 Caledonian Rd., Kings Cross, Islington, N1 9DN/ Tel. +44 (20) 7168 5732/ foodforalluk@aol.com
Manchester, England — 20 Mayfield Rd., Whalley Range, M16 8FT/ Tel. +44 (161) 226 4416/ contact@iskconmanchester.com
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England — 304 Westgate Rd., NE4 6AR/ Tel. +44 (191) 272 1911
◆ **Swansea, Wales —** 8 Craddock St., SA1 3EN/ Tel. +44 (1792) 468469/ iskcon.swansea@pamho.net; restaurant: govin–das@hotmail.com

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London, England — (contact Bhaktivedanta Manor: Krishna conscious programs are held regularly in more than forty other cities in the U.K. For information, contact ISKCON Reader Services, P. O. Box 730, Watford WD25 8EZ, UK; www.iskcon.org.uk)
Upper Lough Erne, Northern Ireland — Govindadwipa Dhama, Inisrath Island, Derrylin, Co. Fermanagh, BT92 9GN/ Tel. +44 (28) 6772 1512/ govindadwipa@pamho.net

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Dublin, Ireland — Govinda's, 4 Aungier St., Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (1) 475 0309/ Fax: (1) 478 6204/ info@govindas.ie
Dublin, Ireland — Govinda's, 18 Merrion Row, Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ praghosa.sdg@pamho.net

AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide — 25 Le Hunte St. (mail: P.O. Box 114, Kilburn, SA 5084)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (8) 8359-5120/ iskconsa@tpg.com.au
Brisbane — 95 Bank Rd., Graceville (mail: P.O. Box 83, Indooroopilly), QLD 4068/ Tel. +61 (7) 3379-5455/ Fax: +61 (7) 3379-5880
Canberra — 44 Limestone Ave., Ainslie, ACT 2602 (mail: P.O. Box 1411, Canberra, ACT 2601)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (2) 6262-6208
Melbourne — 197 Danks St. (mail: P.O. Box 125), Albert Park, VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (3) 9699-5122/ Fax: +61 (3) 9690-4093/ melbourne@pamho.net

Centers Around the World

Newcastle — 28 Bull St., Mayfield, NSW 2304/ Tel. +61 (2) 4967-7000/ iskcon_newcastle@yahoo.com.au

Perth — 155–159 Canning Rd., Kalamunda (mail: P.O. Box 201 Kalamunda 6076)/ Tel. +61 (8) 6293-1519/ perth@pamho.net

Sydney — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9959-4558/ Fax: +61 (2) 9957-1893/ admin@iskcon.com.au

Sydney — Govinda's Yoga and Meditation Centre, 112 Darlinghurst Rd., Darlinghurst NSW 2010 (mail: P.O. Box 174, Kings Cross 1340)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9380-5162/ Fax: +61 (2) 9360-1736/ sita@govindas.com.au

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Bambra, VIC (New Nandagram) — 50 Seaches Outlet, off 1265 Winchelsea Deans Marsh Rd., Bambra VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (3) 5288-7383

Cessnock, NSW (New Gokula) — Lewis Lane, off Mount View Rd., Millfield, near Cessnock (mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock, NSW 2325)/ Tel. +61 (2) 4998-1800/ Fax: +61 (2) 9957-1893/ iskconfarm@mac.com

Murwillumbah, NSW (New Govardhana) — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella (mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. +61 (2) 6672-6579/ Fax: +61 (2) 6672-5498/ ajita@in.com.au

RESTAURANTS

Brisbane — Govinda's, 99 Elizabeth St., 1st Floor, QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (7) 3210-0255

Brisbane — Krishna's Cafe, 1st Floor, 82 Vulture St., West End, QLD 4000/ brisbane@pamho.net

Burleigh Heads — Govinda's, 20 James St., Burleigh Heads, QLD 4220/ Tel. +61 (7) 5607-0782/ ajita@in.com.au

Maroochydore — Govinda's Vegetarian Cafe, 2/7 First Ave., QLD 4558/ Tel. +61 (7) 5451-0299

Melbourne — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-2939

Melbourne — Gopal's, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-1578

NEW ZEALAND AND FIJI

Christchurch, NZ — 83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 25-190)/ Tel. +64 (3) 366-5174/ Fax: +64 (3) 366-1965/ iskconchch@clear.net.nz

Hamilton, NZ — 188 Maui St., RD 8, Te Rapa/ Tel. +64 (7) 850-5108/ rmaster@wave.co.nz

Labasa, Fiji — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912

Lautoka, Fiji — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 6664112/ regprakash@excite.com

Nausori, Fiji — Hare Krishna Cultural Centre, 2nd Floor, Shop & Save Building, 11 Gulam Nadi St., Nausori Town (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs., Suva)/ Tel. +679 9969748 or 3475097/ Fax : +679 3477436/ vdas@frca.org.fj

Rakiraki, Fiji — Rewasa (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243

Suva, Fiji — 166 Brewster Street (mail: P.O. Box 4229, Samabula)/ Tel. +679 3318441/ Fax: +679 3100016/ iskconsuva@connect.com.fj

Wellington, NZ — 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands/ Tel. +64 (4) 478-4108/ info@iskconwellington.org.nz

Wellington, NZ — Gaura Yoga Centre, 1st Floor, 175 Vivian Street (mail: P.O. Box 6271, Marion Square)/Tel. +64 (4) 801-5500/ yoga@gaurayoga.co.nz

RURAL COMMUNITY

Auckland, NZ (New Varshan) — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course (mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu)/ Tel. +64 (9) 412-8075/ Fax: +64 (9) 412-7130

RESTAURANT

Wellington, NZ — Higher Taste Hare Krishna Restaurant, Old Bank Arcade, Ground Floor, Corner Customnhouse, Quay & Hunter Street, Wellington/ Tel. +64 (4) 472-2233/ Fax: 4) 472-2234/ highertaste@wellington.org.nz

EUROPE (partial list)

Amsterdam — Van Hilligaertstraat 17, 1072 JX/ Tel. +31 (20) 675-1404 or -1694/ Fax: +31 (20) 675-1405/ amsterdam@pamho.net

Barcelona — Plaza Reial 12, Entlo 2, 08002/ Tel. +34 93 302-5194/ templobcn@hotmail.com

Bergamo, Italy — Villaggio Hare Krishna (da Medolago strada per Terno d'Isola), 24040 Chignolo d'Isola (BG)/ Tel. +39 (035) 4940706/ villagio.hare.krsna@hare.krsna.it

Budapest — III. Lehel Street 15–17 (Csillaghedy), 1039 Budapest/ Tel. +36 (1) 391-0435/ Fax: (1) 397-5219/ nai@pamho.net

Copenhagen — Skjulhoj Alle 44, 2720 Vanlose, Copenhagen/ Tel. +45 4828 6446/ Fax: +45 4828 7331/ iskcon.denmark@pamho.net

Grödinge, Sweden — Radha-Krishna Temple, Korsnäs Gård, 14792 Grödinge/ Tel. +46 (8) 53029800/ Fax: +46 (8) 53025062 / bmd@pamho.net

Helsinki — Ruoholahdenkatu 24 D (III krs) 00180/ Tel. +358 (9) 694-9879 or -9837/ Email: harekrishna@harekrishna.fi

◆ **Lisbon —** Rua Dona Estefãnia, 91 R/C 1000 Lisboa/ Tel. & fax: +351(1) 314-0314 or 352-0038

Madrid — Espíritu Santo 19, 28004 Madrid/ Tel. +34 91 521-3096

Oslo — Roahagan 1D, Oslo 0754/ Tel. +47 (22) 062266/ gaurahari.sdha@pamho.net

Paris — 230 Avenue de la Division Leclerc, 95200 Sarcelles Village/ Tel. +33 (1) 39885358/ paris@pamho.net

Prague — Jilova 290, Prague 5 - Zlicin 155 21/ Tel. +420 (2) 5795-0391/ info@harekrsna.cz

◆ **Radhadesh, Belgium —** Chateau de Petite Somme, 6940 Septon-Durbuy/ Tel. +32 (086) 322926 (restaurant: 321421)/ Fax: +32 (086) 322929/ radhadesh@pamho.net

◆ **Rome —** Govinda Centro Hare Krsna, via di Santa Maria del Pianto 16, 00186/ Tel. +39 (6) 68891540/ govinda.roma@harekrsna.it

◆ **Stockholm —** Fridhemsgatan 22, 11240/ Tel. +46 (08) 654-9002/ Fax: +46 (8) 650-881; Restaurant: Tel. & fax: +46 (8) 654-9004/ lokanatha@hotmail.com

Warsaw — Mysiadlo k. Warszawy, 05-500 Piaseczno, ul. Zakret 11/ Tel. +48 (22) 750-7797 or -8247/ Fax: +48 (22) 750-8249/ kryszna@post.pl

Zürich — Bergstrasse 54, 8032/ Tel. +41 (044) 262 33 88/ Fax: +41 (044) 262 31 14/ kgs@pamho.net

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France (La Nouvelle Mayapura) — Domaine d'Oublaisse, 36360, Lucay le Mâle/ Tel. +33 (2) 5440-2395/ Fax: +33 (2) 5440-2823

Germany (Simhachalam) — Zielberg 20, 94118 Jandelsbrunn/ Tel. +49 (8583) 316/ info@simhachalam.de

Hungary (New Vraja-dhama) — Krisna-völgy, 8699 Somogyvamos, Fö u, 38/ Tel. & fax: +36 (85) 540-002 or 340-185/ info@krisnavolgy.hu

Italy (Villa Vrindavan) — Via Scopeti 108, 50026 San Casciano in Val di Pesa (FL)/ Tel. +39 (55) 820054/ Fax: +39 (55) 828470/ isvaripriya@libero.it

Spain (New Vraja Mandala) — (Santa Clara) Brihuega, Guadalajara/ Tel. +34 949 280436

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

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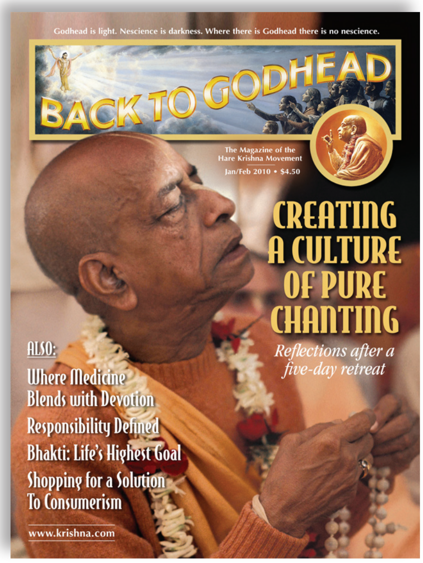
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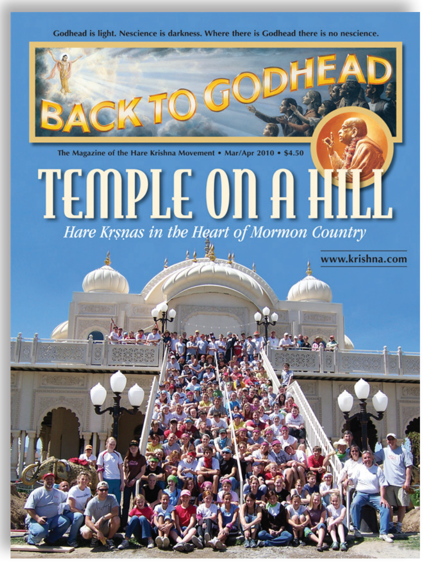
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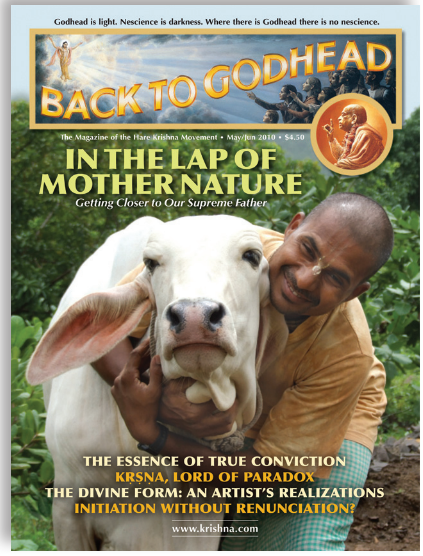
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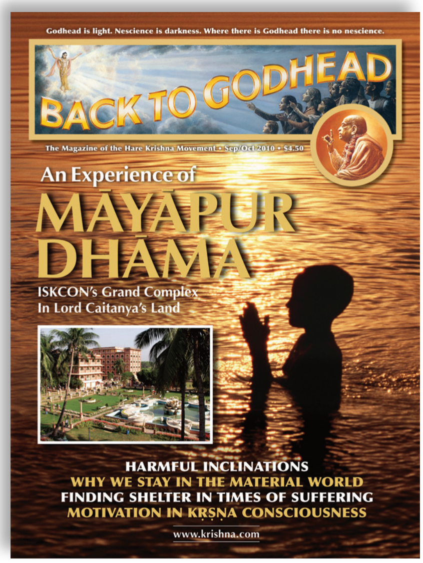
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FROM THE EDITOR

Indelible Desire

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA once paused during a lecture to ask if anyone knew the meaning of some lines from a Bengali song we sing every day: *guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete koriyā aikya, ār nā koriho mane āśā*. Our temple songs are in Sanskrit or Bengali, and Prabhupāda wanted his disciples to understand what they were singing. The translation of these lines is "Make your consciousness one with the words from the guru's lotus mouth and have no desire but this."

Desire is an important topic. Many philosophers, especially in the Indian tradition, know that desires lead to actions, which produce karmic reactions, which produce material bodies, through which the soul transmigrates, each body delivering varieties of suffering. Since desire ends in suffering, philosophers reason that desire must be extinguished. The recommended method for doing this is usually rigorous long-term meditation, which involves stopping all action.

While the theory sounds valid, it has problems. For example, when Arjuna tells Kṛṣṇa he'd rather meditate than fight, Kṛṣṇa replies that inaction is impossible because the soul is active by nature. With the soul present, the body seems independently active. But when the soul leaves the body at death, the body's activities cease. So the soul is the active principle. And desire motivates the soul's actions.

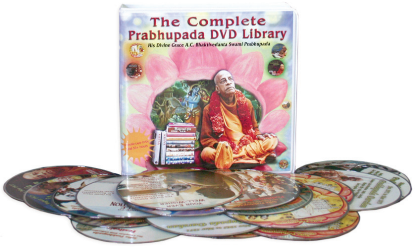
In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* demigods praying to Lord Kṛṣṇa say that even when souls achieve liberation in the *brahmajyoti,* Kṛṣṇa's spiritual effulgence, their desire for activity forces them to reenter the material realm. Prabhupāda often noted that many ascended yogis returned to open hospitals or perform similar welfare work. In the *brahmajyoti* one is supposed to be free of desire, no matter how good it might seem. But although the *brahmajyoti* is theoretically the place of ultimate peace, the soul cannot be peaceful without something to do. Even in the *brahmajyoti*, desires live on.

In contrast to other philosophers, Vaiṣṇavas don't see desire as the culprit. The problem is not desire per se, but desire separate from Kṛṣṇa's interests. The pure soul wants only Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction. In the theoretical view that everything is one, there's no need for desire. And since the soul has desire, it can't stay in the oneness of the *brahmajyoti.* But everything is not one. Kṛṣṇa and each soul are unique individuals, and the soul's desires exist in the context of its eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. The loving relationship between Kṛṣṇa and each soul is the fundamental principle of reality. Everything else—including the soul's desire—grows from that eternal truth. Love, which includes the desire to satisfy the beloved, is the seed of existence.

We honor the Vaiṣṇava guru as a pure soul fully in tune with Kṛṣṇa's desires. The guru's words are sacrosanct for disciples because the guru guides them by teaching the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and engaging them in Kṛṣṇa's service. The guru's words carry the disciple to Kṛṣṇa.

We can see the practical application of these principles in regard to Śrīla Prabhupāda. His only desire was to fulfill Kṛṣṇa's desire, expressed through the scriptures and the succession of previous gurus. Prabhupāda's sacred mission was to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness everywhere, and he engaged his disciples to assist him. His words directing the practical aspects of his mission are spiritual links to Kṛṣṇa, just like his direct talks about Kṛṣṇa and the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. His disciples, grand-disciples, and anyone else who accepts his spiritual guidance can take those words to heart and recover the state of pure desire in Kṛṣṇa's service. —*Nāgarāja Dāsa*

Śrīla Prabhupāda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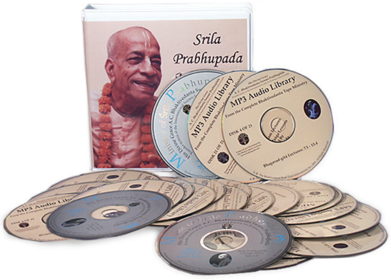
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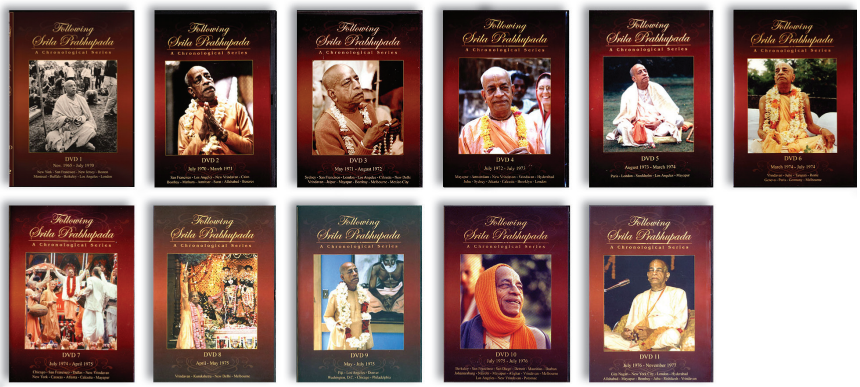
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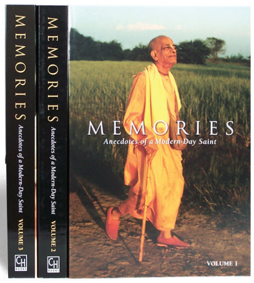
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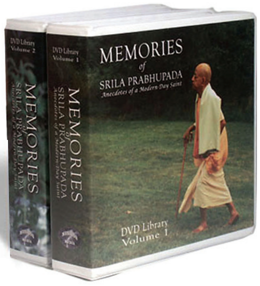
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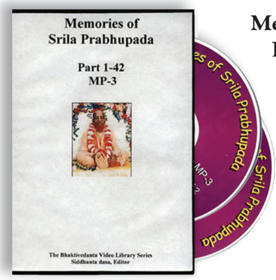
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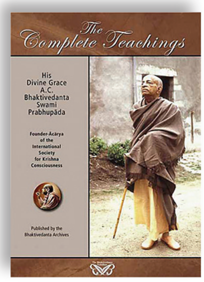
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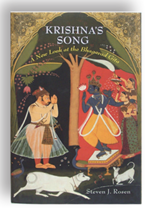
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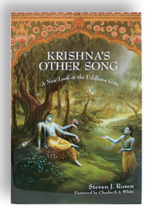
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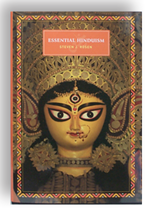
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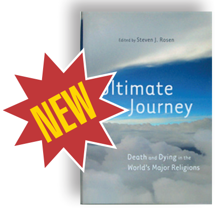
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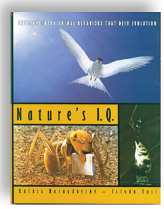

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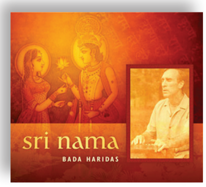
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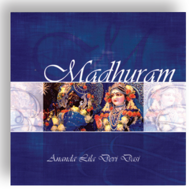
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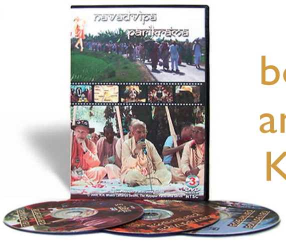
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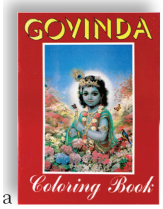
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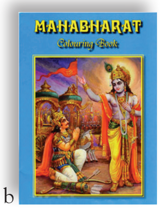
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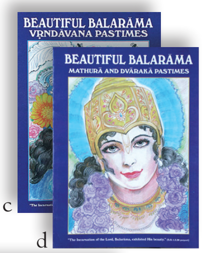
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BEAUTIFUL BALARAMA
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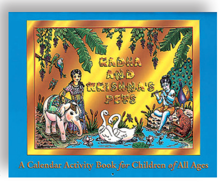
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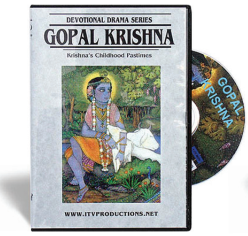
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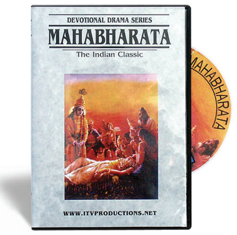
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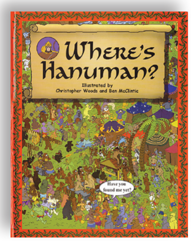
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VEDIC THOUGHTS

The Lord lives in the spiritual world in His original personality, and a devotee who follows the instructions of the Lord approaches Him (*mām eti*). As a spiritual person, such a devotee returns to the Personality of Godhead and plays and dances with Him. That is the ultimate goal of life.

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 8.24.51, Purport

When one's peaceful consciousness, strengthened by the mode of goodness, is fixed on the Personality of Godhead, one achieves religiosity, knowledge, detachment, and opulence.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.19.25

When Hari [Kṛṣṇa], the Lord of all demigods and heavenly residents, is duly worshiped by means of *mahā-mantras* composed of His holy names, the ghostlike sins can no longer exist.

Padma Purāṇa, Svarga-khaṇḍa 50.6

I am drowning in the ocean of birth and death. The fish of my mind is trapped in the horrible narrow well of repeated birth and death. O Lord, please rescue me from this horrible world of birth and death and give me loving devotion for Your lotus feet.

Lord Śiva
Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa 4.6.23

Śrī-nāma-saṅkīrtana [the chanting of the holy names of the Lord] is the best *sādhana* [spiritual practice]. If other *sādhanas* help us in *kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana,* then they deserve to be called *sādhana;* otherwise they are simply impediments to *sādhana*. *Śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana* is the emperor of *sādhanas.* It is the only infallible *sādhana* capable of bringing us to *siddhi* [spiritual perfection].

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura
Śrī Śrīla Prabhupāder Upadeśāmṛta, p. 274

One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* reside at Mathurā [Vṛndāvana], and worship the deity with faith and veneration. These five limbs of devotional service are the best of all. Even a slight performance of these five awakens love for Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta,
Madhya-līlā 22.128–129

One should not hear anything about Kṛṣṇa from a non-Vaiṣṇava. Milk touched by the lips of a serpent has poisonous effects; similarly, talks about Kṛṣṇa given by a non-Vaiṣṇava are also poisonous.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī
Hari-bhakti-vilāsa
(quoting *Padma Purāṇa*)

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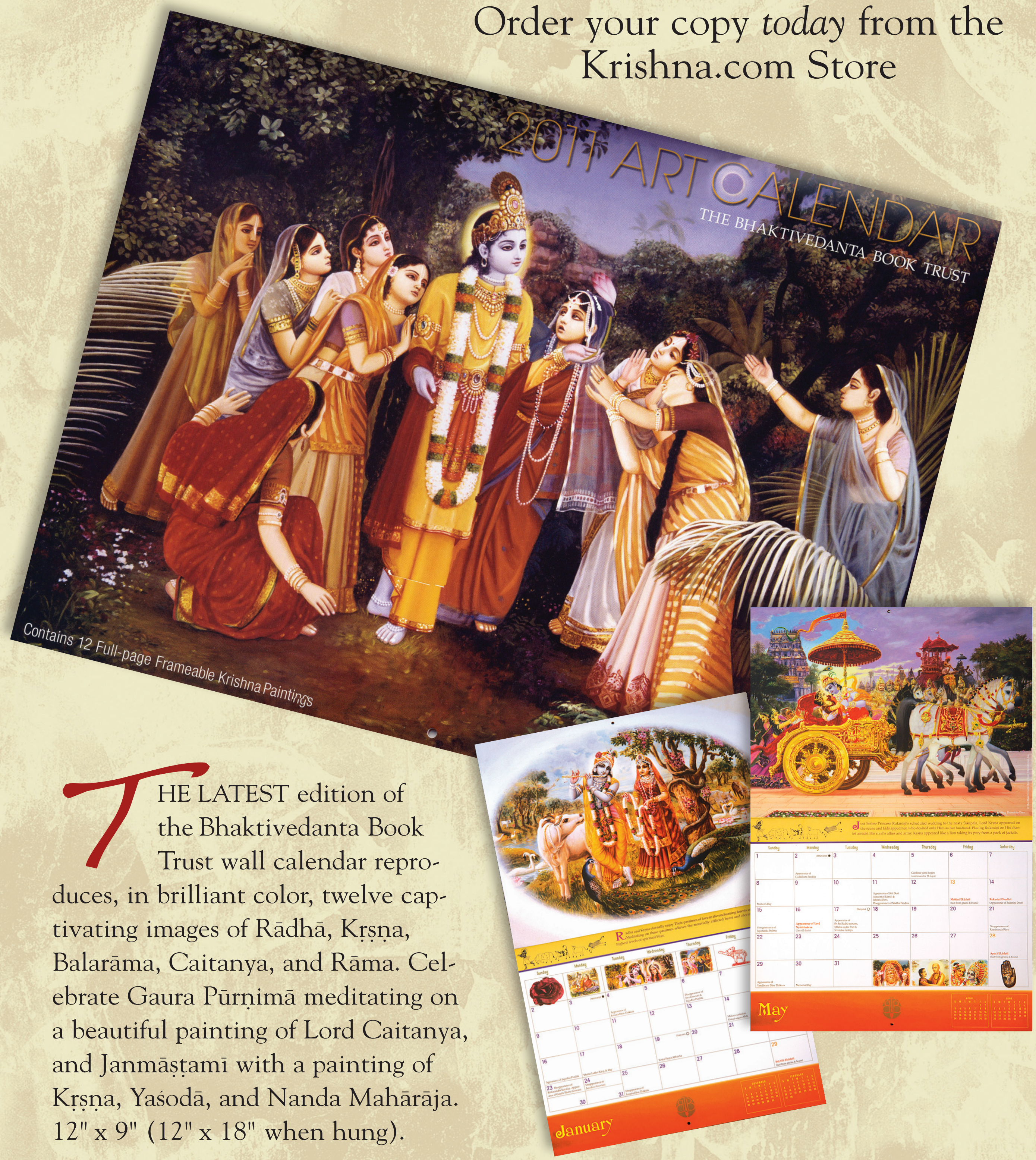
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